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Religious therapeutics: Body and health in Yoga and Āyurvedic medicine

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RELIGIOUS THERAPEUTICS:
BODY AND HEALTH IN YOGA AND ĀYURVEDIC MEDICINE

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ABSTRACT

Religious therapeutics is the term I use to designate relations between health and spirituality, and medicine and religion. Dimensions of religious therapeutics include religious meanings that inform medical theory, religious means of healing, health as part of religious life, and religion as a remedy for human suffering. Classical Yoga is analyzed to establish an initial matrix of religious therapeutics with 5 branches: *philosophical foundations*, *soteriology*, *value theory*, *physical practice*, and *cultivation of consciousness*. Through comparative criticism of classical (Patañjala) Yoga, the study presents a heuristic of religious therapeutics: a model for interpreting relations among healing and liberative functions in world religions.

Body and health are of instrumental but not ultimate value in classical Yoga: the body is used to transcend itself for attainment of Yoga's soteriological goal, realization of self as pure consciousness. Yoga's Saṃkhya-based metaphysics contains an unreconciled dualism, and while practice of Yoga is paradigmatic of mind/body holism, Yoga prescribes realization of a spiritual self, independent of material and psychological nature. The study rehabilitates the body in respect of the compatibility of embodiedness with religiousness.

Other Indian and world traditions suggest dimensions of religious therapeutics both resonant with classical Yoga and lacking from it. India's Āyurvedic medicine represents the sixth branch of religious therapeutics:

medical therapeutics. I distill from Āyurvedic and Western sources a set of determinants of health: biological, medical/psychological, cultural, and metaphysical. Significant determinants of health are wholeness, self-identity, and freedom; these are incorporated in discussion of the complementary functions of medicine and religion, grounding the claim that in classical Yoga, liberation is healing in an ultimate sense.

Tantric yogas utilize material nature for human spiritual progress, and unlike classical Yoga, esteem nature, body/mind, the feminine, and relationality. Tantra provides another branch of religious therapeutics: *aesthetic therapeutics*. The study anticipates elements of health/medicine in western religions, Buddhism, and Lakota religious philosophy. Sacred speech and song are explored to demonstrate comparative inquiry into religious therapeutics; some Native American Indian and Hindu applications of sacred language are considered. Finally, the model of religious therapeutics is supplemented with *community*, embracing ecological, social, and religious relationality and communication.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AV *Atharva-veda*

AD *Āyurveda-dīpika*

BhG *Bhagavadgīta*

CS *Caraka-saṃhita*

HYP *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpika*

MNT *Mahanirvaṇa Tantra*

RV *Ṛg-veda*

SK *Saṃkhya-karika*

SKB *Saṃkhya-karika-bhaṣya*

SCN *Ṣaṭ-cakra-nirupaṇa*

TV *Tattva-vaiśaradī*

Up. *Upaniṣads*

- **Bṛhad. Up.** *Bṛhadaraṇyaka*
- **Chand. Up.** *Chandogya*
- **Kaṭh. Up.** *Kaṭha*
- **Mait. Up.** *Maitri*
- **Muṇḍ. Up.** *Muṇḍaka*
- **Śvet. Up.** *Śvetaśvatara*
- **Tait. Up.** *Taittirīya*

VC *Viveka-cuḍamaṇi*

YBh *Yoga-bhaṣya*

YS *Yoga-sutras*

SYMBOLS AND NOTES ON SOURCES

Radical: √ indicates root words.

Single brackets: [ ] in translated passages enclose words added for clarification.

Translations of passages from the *Yoga-sutras* are the author's.
See Appendix for translation of the *Yoga-sutras*.

Quotations from the *Yoga-bhasya* and the *Tattva-vaiśaradī* are from the English translation *Patañjali's Yoga Sutras* by Rama Prasada. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1912, 1978.

Etymological analyses of Sanskrit terms are based on:

English-Sanskrit Dictionary by V.S. Apte.
New Delhi: Publications India, reprint 1989.

A Practical Sanskrit Dictionary by Arthur Anthony Macdonnell.
Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1924, 1990.

A Sanskrit-English Dictionary by Sir Monier Monier-Williams.
Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1899, 1974.

The Roots, Verb-Forms and Primary Derivatives of the Sanskrit Language by William Dwight Whitney. New Haven, CT: American Oriental Society, 1885, 1945.

INTRODUCTION

This study is a philosophical investigation of body, health and religiousness, claiming that classical Yoga exemplifies a system of *religious therapeutics*. The idea of religious therapeutics embraces meanings and actions that support human well-being with recognition of the common ground and cooperation of health and religiousness. Religious therapeutics has dimensions including religious meanings that inform philosophy of health and medicine, religious means of healing, health as a support for religious life, and religiousness itself as a remedy for the suffering of the human condition. Among instances of religious therapeutics in world traditions are Christianity's New Testament accounts of Jesus as savior and healer, and Navajo religion's focus on healing as restoration of well-being to persons who suffer various forms of digression from the flow of the life force. The idea of religious therapeutics can apply to any number of instances of cooperation between health, healing and religiousness. Taking a broad view, an entire religion can be examined from the perspective of religious therapeutics. The term *religious therapeutic* can also designate specific actions and principles such as the use of prayer for healing, and the Jewish *mitzvah* or religious obligation to visit the sick. Classical Yoga is a system of religious therapeutics --a soteriological tradition of healing and religious liberation-- and also a source of many

specific concepts and practices that promote well-being, psychophysical and spiritual. Part One of the study, "Yoga, the Body, and Health," examines Indian and Western metaphysical and medical thinking about body and health. Part Two, "Yogic and other Religious Therapeutics" presents classical Yoga as a religious therapeutic, then turns to other world traditions for further instances and implications of religious therapeutics.

Integral to the interpretation of classical Yoga as a system of religious therapeutics is the claim that liberation in Yoga is healing in an ultimate sense. "Health" pertains not only to physical and psychophysical well-being, but to the well-being of the whole person, including the person's spiritual nature. Health in its ordinary meaning refers to physical and psychological well-being, but health can be interpreted more broadly, as equivalent to attainment of salvation: attainment of wholeness of the person in his or her true nature, liberated from limitations and from suffering. In medicine, psychology, and other healing arts, "therapeutics" denotes corrective and restorative actions for the body, mind or both. The Greek word *therapeia* means "to attend" as a healer attends a patient, and also "to minister." In Sanskrit and other Indo-European languages, etymological connections between words concerning therapeutics and religiousness provide one species of evidence that medicine and religion at the root both have corrective and healing functions.

Fundamental to investigation of health and religiousness is inquiry into the body. In classical Yoga, the body is the ground of action which can lead

to or obstruct liberation. Liberation according to Yoga is precisely the realization of one's true nature as consciousness, independent of one's material nature. An account of religious therapeutics --whether yogic or another kind-- has to address the body. Human beings are embodied beings, and must come to terms with their physicality in connection with seeking to realize their soteriological potential. Religious therapeutics in classical Yoga operate from a concept of the person as having a psychophysical and a spiritual dimension. Each of these dimensions is subject to healing, in short, to overcoming problems that restrict well-being and vitality, produce suffering, and interfere with the prevailing of the person's true nature. John M. Koller writes that in the Indian traditions, body and mind are generally considered as a unity, and an ontological distinction is drawn between body-mind and Self, rather than between body and mind, as Western traditions tend to do.[1] Consonant with the Indian view, I use the term *psychophysical* to refer to states and processes of embodied human life, and to distinguish the domain of body-mind from that of ultimate self-nature, which according to Yoga is consciousness pure of any materiality.

In the Hindu religious and philosophical traditions in general, the human body is considered different from the true Self that is eligible for liberation.

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[1] John M. Koller, "Human Embodiment: Indian Perspectives" in *Self as Body in Asian Theory and Practice*, ed. Thomas P. Kasulis, Roger T. Ames and Wimal Dissanayake (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1993) 46-47.

In Patañjali's classical Yoga, the soteriological aim is realized in the freeing of *puruṣa*, consciousness, from *prakṛti*, material nature. However, among the *darśanas* or systems of Indian philosophy, Yoga is noteworthy for the integral role it accords to the body in the striving for liberation. Given Yoga's premise that body and Self are entirely distinct, and that the soteriological goal entails the Self's independence from physicality, what can be gained by investigating Yoga's understanding of the body? The central problem of Hindu soteriology may be expressed in these two corollaries:

1) Liberation from ignorance and the suffering it produces;

2) Attainment of one's highest soteriological potential, generally conceived as realization of one's true spiritual identity.

Since human life has an inevitable physical dimension, a major challenge in seeking a spiritual goal is reconciling the physical with the spiritual, or transcending one's embodied situation to one's ultimate situation. Practice of classical or *Aṣṭaṅga* (8-fold) Yoga incorporates cultivation of the body to achieve the transcendence of embodiment. According to the *Saṃkhya-karika*, which provides much of Yoga's metaphysical foundation, all things (and thus human bodies) are instantiations of the whole of creation, and may function as vehicles for attainment of the highest spiritual goal:

> From *Brahman* down to the blade of grass, the creation (*sṛṣṭi*)
> is for the benefit of the soul, until supreme knowledge is attained.
> SK 3.47

The *Yoga-sutras* explain why the true self, *puruṣa*, is associated with the human body:

> The purpose of the conjunction (*saṃyogaḥ*) of the owned [*prakṛti*] and the owner [*puruṣa*] is the *puruṣa's* recognition of the self-natures of the two powers.
> YS 2.23

Because Yoga admits the body as instrumental to attainment of liberative knowledge, and because yoga-practices have health benefits, there is a misconception, particularly in the West, that health is Yoga's goal. Indian views of Yoga on the other hand, in recognizing Yoga as a religious system emphasizing the cultivation of self-nature as consciousness, sometimes minimize the importance of body and health in Yoga. The present study aims to locate the soteriological role of human physicality within the context of Yoga's ultimate aim: attainment of liberation from the nature and constraints of *prakṛti*, and transcendence of the ignorance and suffering which attend material existence.

Indian philosophy is often stereotyped as strictly dualistic as regards body and self. In particular, Saṃkhya, which grounds classical Yoga, has a dualistic ontology, with consciousness and matter as the two primordial forms of being. However, investigation of body and religious therapeutics in Yoga and other Indian traditions reveals a range of interpretations of the relation of body and self. As regards concepts of health, western thinking tends to regard health in physical and psychological terms, but Indian views of person and body substantiate a broader interpretation of health embracing religious and other dimensions of well-being, and demonstrating a closer relation between medical and religious concerns.

While cultivation of body and health is not an end, but a means in classical Yoga, Yoga makes a significant contribution to our understanding of health and the relationship of health and religiousness. Meanings of health derivable from analysis of Yoga inform investigation of health and healing from these two standpoints:

1) Health in its ordinary meaning pertaining to physical and psychological well-being;

2) Liberation as healing in an ultimate sense.

Psychophysical health is integral to Yoga's religious path, but even more important is the healing that constitutes liberation: the prevailing of a person's true nature, and the overcoming of limitations and suffering. Classical Yoga is a system of self-cultivation enjoined for the attainment of liberation, and progress on Yoga's religious path is a process of the healing (recovering the wholeness) of one's true nature. Liberation --as actualization of unobstructed self-identity and the elimination of suffering-- is achievement of the health of the person in her or his fundamental nature. Three claims are defended here:

i) While body and psychophysical health are of instrumental and not ultimate value in classical Yoga, body and health have significant soteriological functions, and Yoga has much to contribute to thought and practice regarding human well-being.

ii) Liberation in Yoga is healing in an ultimate sense. It concerns attainment of well-being with respect to the human being's most fundamental nature and highest soteriological potential.

iii) Classical Yoga constitutes a system of religious therapeutics, and informs a heuristic of religious therapeutics useful for interpreting connections between health and religious life in other world traditions.

Because the word "health" is ordinarily used to denote physical, psychological or psychophysical well-being, it might seem that the use of "health" in reference to spiritual well-being is a metaphorical application of the term. However, the claims advanced here recommend broadening the extension of the term "health" to apply to the well-being and freedom from suffering of the whole person. If the human being is considered to be more than a psychophysical entity, as is the case in Yoga, where *puruṣa* or consciousness is the person's true nature, then it is legitimate to speak of health with respect to this spiritual Self, and of ultimate liberation from suffering as healing. Self-identity is a significant determinant of both psychophysical and spiritual well-being; Wilhelm Halbfass identifies the recovery of self-identity and well-being as a point of connection between psychophysical healing and religious liberation.[7]

Central to the *Yogasutras*' analysis of human suffering is the theory of the *kleśas*, ailments or afflictions (the main one being ignorance) which affect the body and mind, and also affect the person at a more fundamental level of being: the *buddhi* or faculty of knowing, which is the first evolute of *prakṛti* and the faculty most similar to *puruṣa*, for *puruṣa's* nature as pure consciousness is the power that infuses *buddhi* with the power to know. In classical Yoga's metaphysics and soteriology, health at the most fundamental level is the health of the *draṣṭa* or Seer, the human being inclusive of *buddhi*

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[7] Wilhelm Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection: Explorations in Indian Thought* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1991) 250.

as well as mind, senses, and body, whose fundamental nature is *purusa*, pure consciousness. Liberation as healing consists in the *drasta*'s "establishment in his essential nature": *drastuh svarupe'vasthanam* (YS 1.3).

Both psychophysical and spiritual meanings of health are instrumental in classical Yoga. As regards ***psychophysical health***, I examine the soteriological role of body and health in Yoga, and argue that the refined awareness, discipline, and cultivation of the body/mind are integral to yogic religious life, and prepare one for the higher stages of cultivation of consciousness leading to liberation. My interpretation of ***liberation as healing*** utilizes meanings of health revealed by analysis of psychophysical health --such as integration-- and explores metaphysical conceptions of personhood such as identity and freedom in their medical and soteriological implications.

Chapter One examines Yoga and the body in the literature of classical Yoga and the *Vedas*, *Upanisads*, and *Bhagavadgita*, texts that preceded the *Yoga-sutras*, Patañjali's systematization of the principles of Yoga. Āyurveda, India's traditional system of medicine, offers some divergent perspectives on person and body, operating from an orientation that is more pragmatic and scientific, yet still religious. Western philosophical and medical thought is another source for conceptual and comparative study of person and body. Investigation of person and body sets the stage for analysis of the meaning of health, and supports the claim that "health" is properly predicated of the

person, not the body or body/mind only. This point in turn supports the claim that liberation is healing: realization of total well-being.

Chapter Two presents determinants of health drawn from the Āyurvedic text *Caraka-saṃhita* and its commentary *Āyurveda-dīpika*, and from modern western medical philosophy. Aiming for a comprehensive view of health as a positive state, determinants of health are discussed under four headings: 1) biological and ecological, 2) medical and psychological, 3) socio-cultural and aesthetic, and 4) metaphysical and religious. Wholeness, identity and freedom emerge as determinants of health, grounding the interpretation of liberation as healing. Āyurveda expands the yogic model of religious therapeutics by providing a system of medicine and health-care within a religious context.

Chapter Three analyzes texts of classical Yoga, Patañjali's *Yoga-sutras* and the commentaries *Yoga-bhasya* and *Tattva-vaiśaradī*, to present a matrix of classical Yoga as a system of religious therapeutics. This analysis exhibits Yoga's stance on meanings of health in the psychophysical and the spiritual dimensions of human life, and explores connections between Yoga's therapeutic and soteriological elements. Here the concepts of wholeness, integration, identity and freedom illuminate how liberation is healing: the curing of limitations and suffering in an ultimate sense.

Chapters Four and Five turn to other Hindu and world religious traditions to offer a comparative response to classical Yoga's religious

therapeutics. Chapter Four explores Tantra's perspective on body, yoga, and therapeutics, and suggests *aesthetics* as a dimension of religious therapeutics. Toward the reconstruction of the foundations of a heuristic of religious therapeutics, Chapter Five anticipates further inquiry into medicine and religion in some representative world traditions. As an example of inquiry in comparative religious therapeutics, I apply principles of both classical and tantric yoga in discussion of sacred speech and song. Sacred speech and song are forms of religious expression demonstrating the compatibility of embodiedness and participation in the sacred. Finally the model of religious therapeutics is supplemented with the dimension of *community*, incorporating ecological, social, and religious relationality and communication.

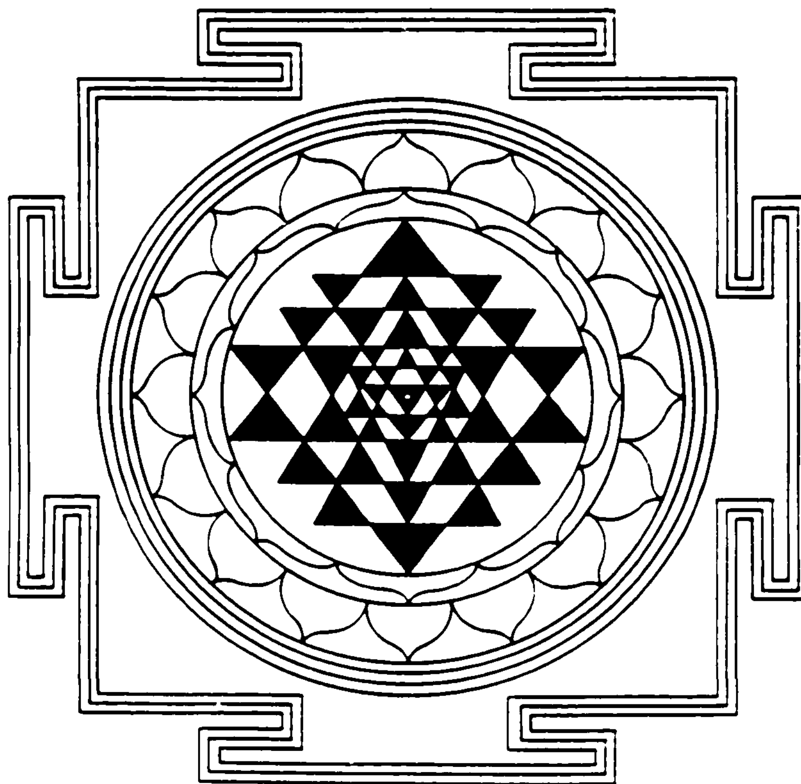
In recent decades, there has been a surge of interest in health and healing, much of which incorporates religious and spiritual concerns. Humankind has an increasingly sharp awareness of threats to the health of the earth and its inhabitants, and of spiritual poverty as one of the factors that underlies interference with environmental and human health. The theme of healing is inherent in world religious traditions, and the Indian tradition, operating from the premise that life is suffering, is a rich source of therapeutics to remedy the human condition. In general, the Indian religio-philosophical traditions are concerned with the well-being of persons in their spiritual dimension, and thus emerges a concept of "spiritual health." Criticism may be lodged against the Indian emphasis of spirituality to the extent that mundane

well-being is neglected. Āyurveda is an antidote to such a criticism. Among world traditions, classical Yoga is a fruitful starting point for inquiry into the relationship of medical and religious health, because it directly addresses the cultivation of health on the material plane, and clearly relates it to spiritual well-being. Many studies of Yoga consider Yoga's potential for promoting physical and/or psychological well-being, while others emphasize Yoga's efficacy for religious liberation, but less research has been done to investigate the *relation* of psychophysical and spiritual well-being. A main contribution of the study is a heuristic of religious therapeutics. Classical Yoga and other sources are used to exemplify and explicate the idea of a religious therapeutic, and to demonstrate its usefulness as an interpretive device.

A primary goal of this study is to contribute to thought about the nature of human life in its embodied and sacred dimensions. Specifically, it aims to add to a more satisfactory account of health, applicable to human life in its many dimensions, including the religious. Besides the imperative for this study from the standpoint of scholarship, contemporary thought and culture show strong interest in health and healing --physical, psychological, environmental, societal, and religious. I hope this study will be of some value in articulating the philosophical elements of religious therapeutics in Yoga and other traditions, and informing productive inquiry into health and practice of health-care.

Part I

YOGA, THE BODY, AND HEALTH



Śrī Yantra
drawn by John Casey

Chapter 1

YOGA AND INTERPRETATIONS OF BODY

Classical Yoga, systematized in Patañjali's *Yoga-sutras,* is an integration and exposition of many strands of yoga present in earlier Indian life and texts including the *Vedas*, *Upaniṣads*, and *Bhagavadgīta*. This inquiry into the body and therapeutic elements of yoga examines meanings of "yoga" and concepts of person and body in the *Yoga-sutras* and other sources. Besides placing classical Yoga and other yogas in historical context, analysis of meanings of yoga opens perspectives on meanings of health. Āyurveda, India's traditional system of medicine, provides some divergent views of person and body. Indian medicine's confrontation with the urgent exigencies of illness leads to perspectives on the body departing in some significant ways from traditional Indian religio-philosophical views. This first chapter concludes with discussion of the body in Western medical philosophy, setting a comparative context for analysis of meanings of health, both medical and religious.

YOGA AND BODY IN HINDUISM

Meanings of 'Yoga'

The word *yoga* is derived from the Sanskrit verbal root √*yuj*, 'to yoke'. The Indo-European root of *yuj* is √*yeug-*, which is also the source of the Latin noun *jugum*, yoke, and the English *yoke*.[1] A range of words derives from the Sanskrit √*yuj*. Primary meanings of *yuj* are to harness, bind, integrate, unite, or unify. Sanskrit words derived from *yuj* have meanings such as: to meditate, recollect, be adapted, be joined to, be bound by (e.g., by duty), be appropriate, and to be logically linked. The derivative noun *yoga* also has a variety of meanings, for instance, the yoking of a team or equipment, union, contact, combination, mixture, connection, relation, perfomance, employment, use, application, remedy, cure, means, expedient, device, opportunity, undertaking, fitness, propriety, order, succession, effort, exertion, endeavor, zeal, assiduousness, occupation, mental concentration, and meditative abstraction.[2]

The great Sanskrit grammarian Paṇini distinguished the root √*yuj* meaning meditative concentration (*yuj samadhau*) from the root √*yujir* meaning connecting or yoking (*yujir yoge*).[3] This distinction is made in Vacaspati's *Tattva-*

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[1] *American Heritage Dictionary*, Appendix: "Indo-European Roots" (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1981) 1550, s.v. "yeug-."

[2] Sir Monier Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary* (London: Oxford University Press, 1899, 1974) 856, s.v. "yoga."

[3] Surendranath Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy*, 5 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1952, 1957) 1:226.

vaiśaradī: "The word 'yoga' is derived from the root $\sqrt{}$*yuj*, to contemplate, and not from the root $\sqrt{}$*yujir*, in which latter case it would mean conjunction" (TV 1.1). The words *yoga* and *religion* share the meaning of yoking; *religion* is derived from the Latin *ligare*, 'to bind', 'to bond', from the Indo-European root $\sqrt{}$*leig*, 'to bind'.[4] While dictionaries list a large number of words derived from *yuj* connoting yoking or connecting, in classical Yoga, *yuj's* primary meaning is yogic meditative absorption, *yuj samadhau*. However, *yuj* in the sense of "uniting" is certainly operative in classical Yoga, and refers to unifying one's efforts, integrating one's physiological functions (for instance by controlling the breath), making one's concentration one-pointed, and overcoming the fragmentation of ordinary human attention and activity.

Eliade notes that an important meaning of yoga is the *effort* of yoking one's powers. The purpose of this effort is "to *unify* the spirit, to do away with the dispersion and automatism that characterize profane consciousness."[5] The effort of self-integration by practice of yoga breaks the bonds keeping *puruṣa* --pure consciousness and the person's true nature-- enmeshed in *prakṛti*, the world and the person's material aspect. In devotional forms of yoga, yoking connotes the yoking of the individual with God. Eliade contends that

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[4] *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd edition, 20 vols. Prepared by J.A. Simpson and E.S.C. Weiner (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989) 17:568, s.v. "religion"; *American Heritage Dictionary*, 1526, s.v. "leig."

[5] Mircea Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, trans. Willard R. Trask (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1958, 1973) 5.

the basic meaning of the verb *yuj*, 'to bind', presupposes "breaking the 'bonds' that unite the spirit with the world."[6] Despite a variety of applications of *yuj* in the sense of yoking, the ultimate aim of yoga according to the *Yoga-sutras* is neither the yoking of the practitioner's aspects nor the joining of the aspirant with the Absolute, but something quite the opposite: *kaivalya*, "independence" or "isolation." *Kaivalya* is the liberation of the person's true nature as pure consciousness, *puruṣa*, independent of material nature, *prakṛti*, as described in the final verse of the *Yoga-sutras*:

> *Puruṣartha-śunyanam guṇanaṃ pratiprasavaḥ kaivalyaṃ svarupa-pratiṣṭha va citi-śakter iti.*
>
> Independence (*kaivalya*) is the re-merging of the *guṇas* [constituents of materiality] back into their latent state [as undifferentiated *prakṛti*, materiality], because of their becoming devoid of the capacity to serve *puruṣa's* purpose. Then *puruṣa* is established in its own true nature, in other words, as pure consciousness.
> YS 4.34

Liberation in classical Yoga is thus not so much a *yoking* as a dissolution of the bonds of matter, so that consciousness may prevail in freedom from the influences of the body and the material world. Yoking is however, integral to the meaning of yoga, for the practices of Yoga --in physical culture and cultivation of higher consciousness-- involve effort toward one-pointed focusing to unify the activities of body, breath, senses, mind, and consciousness.

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[6] Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, 5.

The most explicit designation of yoga is *yoga-darśana*, the philosophical and religious system of yoga systematized by Patañjali. The classical Yoga of Patañjali is known as **Patañjala Yoga**, **Aṣṭaṅga** (8-limbed or 8-fold) **Yoga**, and **Raja Yoga** (whereby one becomes master or king, *raja*, of oneself). Classical Yoga is a synthesis and distillation of a range of traditional Indian techniques of restraint and meditation. In general religio-philosophical terms, *yoga* designates liberative ascetic techniques and methods of meditation. Eliade discusses two senses of liberation in the Indian tradition, one *transcendental*, i.e., pertaining to transcending the human condition and appropriating another mode of being, and the other *mystical*: a "breaking" of the human condition, "a rebirth to a nonconditioned mode of being" which is absolute freedom.[7] Yogic *restraint* of ordinary human activities --of vice, near-constant movement of the body, erratic breathing, and chaotic and distractive mental activity-- is the means of separating oneself from profane life and aspiring to sacred life.

Forms of Yoga

Many forms of yoga exist within India's several religio-philosophical currents. These include non-Hindu Yogas (Buddhist and Jain), tantric yogas, non-systematic "popular" forms of yoga, and the classical Yoga of Patañjali. The following discussion names only the major schools of yoga, beginning with yoga in non-Hindu traditions.

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[7] Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, 4.

In **Buddhism**, the main problem of Indian soteriology --suffering and emancipation-- is treated in part by yogic techniques. Śakyamuni Buddha studied Saṃkhya doctrines and yoga practice during his six years of seeking enlightenment, and his teachers of these two traditions are named in the early Buddhist texts.[8] A major instance of yogic technique in the Buddha's teaching is *sattipaṭṭhana*, "mindfulness" of the body's structure, function, posture, and breathing.

> And how O bhikkus, does a bhikku dwell observing the body in the body? Here a bhikku, having gone to a forest, or to the foot of a tree, sits down crossleged, keeps the body upright and fixes his awareness in the area around the mouth. And with this awareness he breathes in, with this awareness he breathes out. Breathing in a deep breath he understands properly "I am breathing in a deep breath." Breathing out a deep breath he understands properly, "I am breathing out a deep breath..."[9]

The Buddhist practice of mindfulness of breathing does not emphasize physical action and control of breath as does yogic *praṇayama*, but instead emphasizes mental effort, and the gaining of awareness and truth by observing the arising and cessation of physical and mental states. Mindfulness of the body and breath exemplifies Buddhism's emphasis on cultivation of mind and higher knowledge.

Jainism also incorporates yogic practices. For instance, the *Jñanarṇava* of Śubhadra (c. 800 c.e.) discusses postures, regulation of breath, and yogic

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[8] *Buddhacarita*, 12.17ff; *Saundarananda* 15-17; *Majjima-nikaya*, 1.164ff, cited in Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, 162.

[9] *Maha-sattipaṭṭhana-suttanta* (Pondichery: All India Press, 1985) 5.

meditation methods.[10] The Jain scholar Haribhadra (c. 750 c.e.) among his hundreds of other works, wrote treatises on yoga, notably the *Yoga-bindu* and *Dṛṣṭi-samuccaya*. Jainism influenced classical Yoga's ethics, especially its inclusion of the fundamental Jain principle of *ahimsa*, non-injury.[11]

Tantra is the religious philosophy of scriptures called *tantras*. The literal meaning of *tantra* is "loom." Its verbal root is $\sqrt{tan}$, 'to extend', 'to expand', pertaining especially to the extending of knowledge. Tantrism is a sub-tradition of Hinduism, Budhhism, and Jainism which emerged around the 4th century c.e., and its texts address a broad range of philosophical and religious subjects. Tantrism influenced philosophy, mysticism, ritual, ethics, iconography, and literature, and was popular among religious practitioners and scholars alike.[12] Tantra both shares in and diverges from traditional vedic thought, and is noteworthy for its valuing of *śakti*, the feminine principle. Along with Tantra's reaffirmation of the feminine, worshipped as the Mother-goddess in proto-Indian civilization, Tantra affirms the value of the body as both an instrument and participant in liberation. Tantra has been unjustly sensationalized because of its ritual use of sexual and other traditionally forbidden activities, but Tantra has much to contribute to expanding our understanding of body and yoga.

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[10] Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, 210.

[11] Georg Feuerstein, *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Yoga* (NY: Paragon, 1990) 150.

[12] Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, 200.

Kuṇḍalinī Yoga, part of the tantric tradition, uses the esoteric physiology of *cakras*, "wheels" or energy-centers along the axis of the spine, and *nadīs*, "channels" through which *praṇa*, the life-force circulates. *Kuṇḍalinī* is conceived as cosmic energy, often depicted as a snake coiled at the lowest of the *cakras*. The yogin who practices Kuṇḍalinī Yoga aims to redirect his psychospiritual energy, in the form of the feminine principle *kuṇḍalini-śakti*, upwards through the *cakras* to the crown of the head, where it unites with the masculine principle *Śiva*, resulting in *samadhi*. Yogic practices such as *praṇayama* or control of the breath and vital energy are thought to activate *kuṇḍalinī's* ascent, culminating in attainment of the enlightened consciousness called *samadhi*.[13]

The well-known **Haṭha Yoga** incorporates doctrines of Kuṇḍalinī Yoga. Haṭha Yoga emphasizes physical purification, *asana* or postures, and *praṇayama*. Consonant with tantrism, Haṭha Yoga regards the perfection of the body as instrumental to attainment of liberation. *Haṭha* means 'force' or 'forceful'. Figuratively, *ha* signifies the heating energy of the sun, and represents inhalation, while *ṭha* denotes the moon's cooling energy and represents exhalation. Haṭha Yoga's main text, the *Haṭha-yoga-pradīpika* presents

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[13] Main texts of Kuṇḍalinī Yoga are the *Ṣaṭcakranirupana* (describing the *cakras*), the *Paduka-pañcaka*, "The Fivefold Footstool," and the *Gorakṣa Samhita*.

techniques of activating kuṇḍalinī energy for the sake of spiritual progress.[14] Haṭha Yoga is not merely a system of physical cultivation; the *Haṭha-yoga-pradīpika* integrates physical disciplines with the higher spiritual disciplines of classical or Raja Yoga, and Haṭha texts present Haṭha Yoga as a means to Raja Yoga.[15] However, Tantra and Haṭha Yoga are diametrically opposed to classical Yoga in holding that enlightenment involves illumination of body as well as consciousness, for classical Yoga aims for the establishment of the self as consciousness free from the body.

The different types of yoga may be considered in terms of six periods in the history of yoga: proto-Yoga, pre-classical, epic, classical, post-classic, and modern yoga. Evidence about the Proto yoga of the period of the Indus valley civilization (c. 2600-1500 b.c.e.) exists in archaeological findings such as statues and seals with images of persons in yoga postures, and also references in the first Indian texts, the Vedas. Pre-classical yoga consists of the first detailed articulations of yogic practices and meditation in the early Upaniṣads, dating from c. 800 b.c.e. Epic yoga (c. 500 b.c.e.-200 c.e.) designates the yoga of the middle Upaniṣads, and the great epic the *Mahabharata*, which

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[14] The *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpika* (14th C. c.e.) was written by Svatmarama Yogīndra, who named as his gurus the circa 10th C. tantric adept Matsyendra, and his disciple Gorakṣa, author of the *Gorakṣa-samhita*.

[15] *Haṭha-yoga-saṃhita* 4.104, *Gheranda-saṃhita* 1.1, *Śiva-saṃhita*, 5.181.

includes the revered scripture the *Bhagavadugīta*. For persons of different natures, the *Gīta* offers three yogic paths: **Jñana Yoga**, the yoga of knowledge, **Karma Yoga**, the yoga of action, (BhG 3.3), and **Bhakti Yoga**, the yoga of devotion to the Lord (BhG 18.57). *Jnana Yoga* is cultivation of discriminative knowledge and the use of the mind to free itself from matter and bondage, and *Karma Yoga* is the carrying out of one's responsibilities in the world without desire or aversion. *Bhakti Yoga*, related to both the yoga of knowledge and the yoga of action, is grounded in adoration of the Lord and offering all one's actions to him.

Classical Yoga (c. 200 b.c.e.) denotes the Saṃkhya-based Yoga systematized in Patañjali's *Yogasutras* and expounded by extensive commentaries in subsequent centuries. The *Yogasutras* distill elements of earlier forms of yoga, and systematize an eight-fold program of disciplines culminating in enlightened realization of self as consciousness, free of the constraints of embodiment. Post-classical yoga (c. 200-1900 c.e.) includes Haṭha Yoga, tantric yogas, and the yoga Upaniṣads. In general, the approximately 20 yoga Upaniṣads incorporate the subtle physiology of Tantra's Kuṇḍalinī Yoga. The Yoga Upaniṣads do not accept the dualistic metaphysics of classical Yoga, but instead advocate Vedanta, the monistic metaphysics dominating Indian philosophy and religion from the time of the earliest Upaniṣads to the present day. Several of the yoga *Upaniṣads* list four varieties of yoga:

> Yoga, although one, is according to practice and usage, O Brahman! differentiated as of various kinds [chief among them are]:

> Mantra-yoga, Laya-, what is known as Haṭha- and Raja-yoga.
> *Yoga-tattvopaniṣad*, 19

Mantra Yoga aims for dissolution of mind by *mantras*, sacred Sanskrit sounds chanted or silently meditated upon, which are imbued with qualities thought to contribute to meditative awareness and attainment of liberation. Mantra Yoga also employs *praṇayama* and cultivation of the ascent of *kuṇḍalinī*. **Laya Yoga**, the yoga of absorption or dissolution, involves methods such as meditation on "the inner sound" (*śadba*), leading to dissolution of mental activity. In modern yoga, dating from the 20th century, the work of Aurobindo (1872-1950) is preeminent. His **Purna Yoga**, "Integral Yoga" incorporates elements of Raja, Haṭha, the *Gītā's* yogas of action, knowledge and devotion, and the tantric Kuṇḍalinī and Mantra Yogas. Purna Yoga offers a spiritual path relevant in the present circumstances of global crisis, and seeks to integrate the quest for individual liberation with humankind's evolutionary destiny.[16]

Hindu Conceptions of Body and Yoga

Hegel's claim that "man ... has not been posited in India" is the point of departure for Wilhelm Halbfass' discussion of man and self in *Tradition and*

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[16] Śri Aurobindo, *The Synthesis of Yoga* (Pondicherry: Śri Aurobindo Ashram, 1971).

Reflection: Explorations in Indian Thought.[17] Halbfass concludes that the idea of man as a rational animal and as a being capable of apprehending the future has been articulated in Indian thought, but that owing to the soteriological orientation of Indian philosophy, this particular concept of man is not central in the way it is for Western thought.

The Sanskrit word for human being, *manusya*, is derived from the verbal root √*man*, 'to think', which is also the root of the noun *manas*, 'mind'. The word *manusya* is not as significant as the word *atman*, the Self and immortal essence inherent in all living entities.[18] It is *atman* and not the human as *homo sapiens* which is to be liberated.[19] *Ātman* is common to all living beings, yet there is another way that man is not-different from other beings: All are subject to *samsara*, transmigratory existence through innumerable births and deaths. Transitions are possible among existences as supra human, human, animal, and even plant. But the human being has a special and perhaps exclusive soteriological qualification or *adhikara*, the capacity for liberative knowledge. Liberative knowledge is knowledge that permits discovery or realization of one's true nature, and freedom from the cycle of *samsara*. In view of this special qualification it is said in the *Mahabharata* that there is none higher than the human being. Man's potential for religious liberation is a

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[17] Wilhelm Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection*, 265.

[18] Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection*, 237.

[19] Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection*, 275.

critical factor in the Indian traditions' views of the nature of person, body and self.

Sanskrit terms for the human body include *śarīram* and *dehaḥ*. Both of these words reflect the predominant Indian view that the body is not the person's true and fundamental nature. *Śarīram* is derived from the verbal root √*śṛ*, 'to break': the body ultimately breaks apart. The word *dehaḥ* suggests an envelope; it derives from the verbal root √*dih*, 'to cover', alluding to the cloak or container of an immaterial Self. John M. Koller explains that the many sub-traditions of India offer diverse interpretations of the human body. Among the details of these views, he identifies two common features: 1) Body is really body-mind, and an ontological line is drawn between body-mind and Self, and 2) The body-mind is not a static entity, but a karmic process

> ...constituted by interaction with other processes in an ever-widening sphere that extends ultimately to the whole world, linking each person to other persons and beings in a web of interconnections that extends to all times and places.[20]

While the Western philosophical tradition has tended to oppose mind and body, the Indian view of the person tends to begin with a concept of integrated psycho-physiological functioning, in Koller's words, "seeing the body as

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[20] John M. Koller, "Human Embodiment: Indian Perspectives," in *Self as Body in Asian Theory and Practice*, ed. Thomas P. Kasulis, Roger T. Ames, and Wimal Dissanayake (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1993) 45.

conscious and consciousness as bodily activity."[21] The body-mind complex is rejected as the real Self, and like the Anglo-European struggle to reconcile body and mind, the Indian traditions have the problem of relating body-mind to Self. While the Western traditions are interested in the problem primarily from a philosophic standpoint, the Indian traditions value knowledge particularly for its soteriological usefulness. Thus the problem of the nature of the person is of utmost importance. In yoga, the "lived body-mind" is important as an instrument in freeing the real Self from the bonds of *saṃsara*, the cycle of suffering and rebirth in embodied existence.

There are two Indian traditions which reject --on different grounds and with different implications-- the existence of a Self beyond the lived body-mind. They are both *nastika*, i.e., not among the Veda-accepting (*astika*) systems: 1) Buddhism, where a non-substantialist view of the human psychophysical entity replaces a notion of "Self," and 2) Carvaka, the materialist *darśana*, which considers the living body identical to the self, and rejects the possibility of survival after the body's death. Carvaka differs from Western materialism in that Carvaka considers the body to be imbued with consciousness.[22]

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[21] Koller, "Human Embodiment," in *Self as Body*, 47.

[22] Koller, "Human Embodiment," in *Self as Body*, 48.

Ancient Indian interpretations of the person do not entirely exclude simple mind-body dualism. Frits Staal notes the *Maitri Upaniṣad's* reference to the tranquil eternal one by whom "this body is set up in intelligence... (and) who propels it" (Mait. Up. 2.3-4). The *Bṛhadaraṇyaka Upaniṣad* says the "knowing self" or "breathing self" has entered the bodily self (*śarīra atma*) as fire is put in a fire receptacle (Bṛhad. Up. 1.4.7).[23] Jainism, another of the three *nastika* or non-Hindu *darśanas*, holds a more radical dualistic account of the person. The soul, *jīva*, pervades the body and is spatially co-extensive with it, because the soul's indefinitely many space-points (*pradeśa*) precisely assume the dimensions of the corporeal form they occupy.[24]

One way of classifying Hindu texts is according the three groups *śruti*, *smṛti*, and *nyaya*. These categories indicates a text's source, and hence its degree of authority. Because vedic writings are considered to be revealed, they have the designation *śruti*, 'heard', 'revealed' |√*śru*, 'to hear'|. Along with the *Vedas* and their commentaries are the auxiliary vedic writings: *Upavedas* or *Vedaṅgas*, dealing with technical subjects such as language, the arts, and medicine. For instance, the texts of Āyurveda are in the category of vedic

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[23] Frits Staal, "Indian Bodies," in *Self as Body*, 59-60.

[24] *Tattvartha-sutra* 5.16, cited in Staal, "Indian Bodies," in *Self as Body*, 60.

accessory literature. The second group is ***smrti***, [√*smr*, 'to remember']. These are traditional religio-philosophical texts, including the great epics, called *Puranas*, such as the *Mahabharata*, of which the *Bhagavadgita* is a part. These works are revered, but held to be born of human memory, and thus not directly of divine origin as are the *Vedas*. The ***nyaya*** classification contains the rationalistic texts that present the *darśanas* or systems of philosophy. (*Nyaya* as a classification of texts is not to be confused with the specific system *Nyaya*, the system of logic.) Some *nyaya* texts are in *sutra*-form (such as the *Yoga-sutras*), and some are not. ***Sutra***, 'thread', derives from √*siv*, 'to sew', and refers to concise aphorisms that function like threads to hold together the fabric of meaning which is a text. *Śastras* or compendiums of instruction [√*śas* 'to command] give principles and prescriptions in a range of philosophical and practical domains. For instance, the *Manava-dharma-śastra* or "Lawbook of Manu" addresses proper action and achievement of aims in social life. The *Upavedas*, *vedangas*, *sutras*, and *śastras*, while not possessing the religious authority of the Vedas, are nevertheless part of the legacy of *rsis* or Seers, and are rooted in *rta*, the *Rgveda*'s concept of cosmic and moral order.

Body and Yoga in the Vedas

Vedic treatments of the nature of the human being are embedded in mythic and ritualistic contexts. The climate of the *Vedas* is more earthly and temporal than that of subsequent Indian thought, and in the *Vedas*, man is

treated more as an earthly, temporal being. In vedic usage, the words *atman* and *purusa* tend to refer to the embodied person, rather than to the absolute self, as is the case in later Indian thought.[25] Another term referring to person or self which occurs frequently in the Vedas is *jiva*. Etymologically, *atman* means breath and and *jiva* means life. Troy Wilson Organ identifies a variety of usages of *atman* and *jiva in the Rgveda*. The word *jiva* is used in the *Rgveda* to mean 1) Life in general: "Rise, woman, and go to the world of living beings (*jivas*) (RV 10:2.2.8); and 2) Individual life: "I erect this circle of stones for the protection of the living (*jiva*)." (RV 10:2.2.4).

The term *atman* is pivotal in a *Rgveda* cremation prayer to Agni that indicates a vedic belief in a self different from the body: "Agni, consume him not entirely... Let the eye repair to the sun, the breath (*atman*) to the wind" (10:1.16.3). Besides denoting breath, *atman* can denote the body, as in these hymns pertaining to healing:

> The virtues of the plants which are desirous of bestowing wealth issue from them, man, towards thy body (*atman*) like cattle from a pen.
> RV 10:8.7.8

> ...I banish disease from each limb, from each hair, from each joint where it is generated, from thy whole person (*atman*).
> RV 10:12.12.5-6

Atman denotes life and existence in the *Rgveda*, for example, in thanks to Indra for bestowing existence on man (RV 1:1.11.8). *Atman* means the life principle inseparable from the body and imperceptible (RV 1:22.8.4), and also suggests

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[25] Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection*, 267-68.

vitality: "May he, the bull, be the impregnator of the perpetual plants, for in him is the *atman* of both the fixed and the movable worlds..." (RV 7:6.12.6). Often the word *atman* as it occurs in the *Ṛgveda* is taken to mean self. For example: "Thou flowest, Indu (denoting Soma), the inviolable, the most exhilarating; thou art thyself (*atman*) the best support of Indra" (RV 9:4.18.3). Another significant meaning of *atman* in the *Ṛgveda* is essence or real nature: "As soon as I take these plants in my hand making the sick man strong, the soul (*atman*) of the malady perishes..." (RV 10:8.7.11).[26]

Vedic texts, particuarly the *Brahmaṇas*, classify man as a *paśu*, a domesticated animal, but as the preeminent animal, the ruler of all other animals, and the only animal able to perfom ritual and sacrifice. Man is *sukṛta*, well-made, and his ritual powers, access to sacred texts, and power to influence the universe are ascribed in the *Atharvaveda* (AV 10:2) to his unique association with *Brahman*, the supreme cosmic principle.[27] The vedic classification of the human as a member of the animal kingdom demonstrates a body-oriented view of man in vedic thought, in which humans and other animals are classified together largely on the basis of physical similarity.

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[26] Troy Wilson Organ, *The Self in Indian Philosophy* (London, The Hague: Mouton and Co., 1964) 26-28. Quotations from the *Ṛgveda* are from the translation of H.H. Wilson, *Rig-Veda-Sanhita: A Collection of Ancient Hindu Hymns of the Rig-Veda*, vols. 1-6 (Poona: Astekar and Co., 1925-28).

[27] Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection*, 266-69.

Further evidence of emphasis on man in his bodily nature is present in the vedic perspective on man as an agent of ritual and sacrificial acts. In the religious holism that pervades the *Ṛgveda*, both body and consciousness are instruments of agency, particularly sacrificial agency. No dualism is exhibited between the Self and the body-mind. In the inspired vision of the vedic *ṛsis*, the body is the locus of consciousness, and the body's volitional actions are entirely dependent on consciousness.[28]

Man's superior intelligence, discernment, and expression are noted in the *Aitareya Āraṇyaka*. A significant dimension of man's power to know, and his distinctness from other animals, is his consciousness of the future. The ability to "know the tomorrow" (*veda śvasthanam*) is a necessary component of man's soteriological prerogative. *Mokṣa*, freedom from worldly limitations, is achieved by ritual action informed by knowledge of *dharma*. Acting according to *dharma* is contingent upon grasping the temporal horizons within which *dharma* has meaning. In vedic thought, man's capacity to understand *dharma* grounds his soteriological mandate and opportunity: Consciousness of the future is requisite for an individual's efforts to gain freedom from immediate desires and to accumulate religious merit.

Man as a rational animal has powers superior to those of other animals, but man's highest potential is not the exercise of this power in dominion over

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[28] Koller, "Human Embodiment," in *Body as Self*, 47-48.

the earth and its creatures. In fact, such dominion is undesirable. Man's soteriological privilege is to become liberated from the world, not master of it. His mandate is not to make use of other beings, but to use his own human existence as a vehicle of self-transcendence.[29] The theme of self-transcendence is gradually developed with the evolution of yogic paths of self-cultivation for the purpose of gaining liberation.

The *Ṛgveda* does not contain references to yoga as a discipline. The word "yoga" in the *Ṛgveda* has meanings such as yoking, connecting, and achieving the unachieved.[30] But the theme of yoking livestock, and the symbolic yoking of powers, is a recurring theme in the *Ṛgveda*. The following hymn uses the metaphor of yoking to liken the work of the sacrificial priests to the work of farmers in their fields:

> The inspired poets who know how harness the plough and stretch
> the yokes on either side to win favor among the gods.
> RV 10:101.4

Agricultural and yoking metaphors abound also in the *Atharvaveda*, which provides a wealth of material for inquiry into vedic conceptions of healing.

> Homage to the ploughs (*laṅgala*), homage to thy [wagon] poles-and
> yokes: let the *kṣetriya* [hereditary-disease]-effacing plant fade
> the *kṣetriya* away
> AV 2:8.4 (tr. Whitney)

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[29] Halbfass, *Tradition and Relflection*, 269-73.

[30] Dasgupta, *History of Indian Philosophy*, 1:226.

Praṇa, the vital energy carried by the breath, is a fundamental bridge to liberation in yoga, and it is extolled in the *Atharvaveda*:

> Reverence be,
> O Praṇa,
> to thee coming,
> reverence to thee going;
> reverence to thee standing,
> and reverence to thee sitting!
>
> Reverence be to thee,
> O Praṇa,
> when thou breathest in (*pranate*),
> reverence when thou breathest out!
> Reverence be to three when thou art turned away,
> reverence to thee when thou art turned hither:
> to thee, entire, reverence be here!
>
> Of thy dear form,
> O *Prana*,
> of thy very dear form,
> of the healing power that is thine,
> give unto us,
> that we may live!
> AV 11:4:7-9 (tr. Bloomfield)

Vedic texts contain supplications and praise of superior deities, but in the *upaniṣads* there is a turn toward *knowledge* as the means of realizing one's primordial identity with the one Absolute, *Brahman*. Various perspectives on the body are found in the *upaniṣads*, but most predominant is the theme of the true Self as *Ātman*, the individual instantiation of *Brahman*.

Body and Yoga in the Upaniṣads

While Western philosophy has struggled with the relation of mind and body, the parallel problem in Indian philosophy is the relation of Self to the body-mind complex. The *upaniṣads* offer a number of interpretations of this problem, most of them offering organic, holistic accounts of the person wherein the person's fundamental nature, *Ātman*, is shown to be not-different from the one Absolute, *Brahman*. An illustration of this principle is given in the instruction of Śvetaketu by his father, who imparts that the One, having longed to become many, diversified itself into the elements fire, water, and earth, and entered these elements as *atman*. *Ātman* is the ground of all manifest things, just as clay is the basis of all the various clay objects (Chand. Up., Bk. 6). A view of the self as having both an individual and a universal aspect is expressed in the allegory of the two birds in a tree, one eating fruit, the other abstaining and looking on (Muṇḍ Up. 3.1.1; Śvet. Up. 4.). The bird who eats is the individual self, given to physical enjoyment and suffering, the other bird is the true self, the universal Brahman.

A significant reference to body in the *upaniṣads* is the account of all creation originating from the body of *Brahman*.

> From this Self (*Brahman*), space arose; from space, wind; from wind, fire; from fire, water; from water, the earth; from the earth, herbs; from herbs. food; from food, semen; from semen, the person (*puruṣa*). Tait. Up. 2.1

Next the *upaniṣad* presents the widely employed five-sheaths model of the person whose core and source is *atman*. The five sheaths (*pañcakośas*) are conceived as a series of layers, the outermost being "food" or the material body, and filled successively with the selves of breath or life-force, mind, consciousness, and at the center, bliss. The sheath of bliss is interpreted as either identical to or containing the innermost true Self (Tait. Up., 2.2-5). In this account of the person, the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* provides one of the first upaniṣadic references to yoga. Each of the five sheaths is presented in metaphoric terms as a person, and the fourth sheath --the person consisting of understanding-- is described thus: "Faith is its head; righteousness the right side; truth the left side; *yoga* (translated by Hume as *contemplation*) is the body (*atman*); and might, the lower part, is the foundation" (Tait. Up. 2.4). The upaniṣadic five-sheath doctrine is accepted by Vedanta and most schools of post-classical yoga, but not by classical Yoga. An image of the body more consonant with that of classical Yoga is given in the *Maitri Upaniṣad*, a Saṃkhya-oriented *upaniṣad*.

> Sir, in this ill-smelling, unsubstantial body, which is a conglomerate of bone, skin, muscle, marrow, flesh, semen, blood, mucus, tears, rheum, feces, urine, wind, bile and phlegm, what is the good of enjoyment of desires? In this body, which is afflicted with desire, anger, covetousness, delusion, fear, despondency, envy, separation from the desirable, union with the undesirable, hunger, thirst, senility, death, disease, sorrow and the like, what is the good of enjoyment of desires? Mait. Up. 1.3

The *Maitri Upaniṣad* also incorporates elements of esoteric physiology, later incorporated in tantric yoga:

> Now, it has elsewhere been said: There is a channel called the Suṣumṇa, leading upward, conveying the breath, piercing through the palate. Through it, by joining (√*yuj*) the breath, the syllable *Om*, and the mind, one may go aloft... by binding together (*saṃ-yogya*) the senses... one goes to selflessness... becomes a non-experiencer of pleasure and pain; he obtains the absolute unity (*kevalatva*).
> Mait. Up. 6.21

Another important Indian account of the person is that of the "three bodies," the gross, subtle, and causal, explicated in Śaṅkara's *Viveka-cuḍamaṇi*. "The Crest-Jewel of Discrimination," (8th C. c.e.). The doctrine of the three bodies is alluded to in the *Maitri Upaniṣad* (Mait. Up. 6.10). Wimal Dissanayake gives the following explanation of three bodies: The gross body (*sthula śarira*), preoccupied with experiences of pleasure and pain as a result of contact with gross objects, is the physical body which we erroneously think is the self. The subtle body (*suksma śarira*), mentioned in *Maitri Up.* 6.10, may be understood in terms of dream consciousness. The contents of dream consciousness are subtle elements (*tanmatras*) which lack material properties, but are able to influence personality and waking consciousness. The gross body is unable to understand the subtle forces, but the subtle body can understand them, because it is of the same non-material nature as these forces. Thus the subtle body is responsible for the phenomenon of being at once a participant in and and a witness to one's dream experience. The causal or karmic body (*karaṇa*

śarīra) is the most complex of the three bodies. It contains the *saṃskaras* or impressions of experience which are the results of one's past actions. The principle of *karma* holds that all actions arise according to past conduct, and that all actions have effects in both the life of the person who acts, and in the world. Therefore, the causal body contains the possibilities of how a particular person's life experiences will manifest.[31]

The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* provides one of the earliest articulations of yoga, and expresses a central way of conceiving yoga, as restraint of the senses, likened to the yoking of "the vicious horses of a chariot driver" (Kaṭh Up. 3.5). In this metaphor, the self, *atman*, rides in a chariot which is the body. The driver is the intellect or faculty of discriminating wisdom (*buddhi*) and mind (*manas*) is the reins. In this *upaniṣad* the young man Naciketas receives instruction from Yama, the Lord of Death, on the means of attaining *Brahman* and immortality. Yama teaches that the wise one may transcend joy and sorrow by the yoga-study of what pertains to the self, "set in the secret place [of the heart], dwelling in the depth primeval-- by considering him as God" (Kaṭh. Up. 2.12). Yama instructs that this self is not slain when the body is slain (repeated in the *Bhagavadgīta*, 2.19-20). Yama describes yoga thus:

> When cease the five [sense-] knowledges,
> together with the mind (*manas*),
> And the intellect (*buddhi*) stirs not -
> That, they say, is the highest course.

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[31] Wimal Dissanayake, Introduction to Part Two: "The Body in Indian Theory and Practice," in *Self as Body*, 41-42.

This they consider as yoga -

The firm holding back of the senses.
Then one becomes undistracted.
Yoga, truly, is the origin and the end.
Kaṭh. Up. 6.10-11

The *Kaṭha's* ranking of the aspects of the person is similar to the later Saṃkhya-Yoga concept. There is nothing higher than the *puruṣa*. At successively lower levels are the Unmanifest (*avyakta*), the Great Self (*Ātman*), the discriminative intellect (*buddhi*), the mind (*manas*), the objects of sense, and the senses (Kaṭh. Up. 3.10). In addition to germs of classical Saṃkhya-Yoga, the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* also has elements of esoteric physiology. In a concluding verse, reference is made to the 101 channels or *nadīs*, and the one that "passes up to the crown of the head," the *Suṣumṇa* (Kaṭh. Up. 6.16).[32]

A sixfold (*ṣaḍaṅga*) yoga is recommended in the *Maitri Upaniṣad*. A beautiful description is given of *Brahma*, the One in the sun, in the cooking fire, and in the heart. Realization of the unity of self with the limitless One is attainable by six yogic means: restraint of the breath (*praṇayama*), withdrawal of the senses (*pratyahara*), meditation (*dhyana*), concentration (*dharaṇa*), rational contemplation (*tarka*), and meditative absorption (*samadhi*) (Mait. Up. 6.18). This six-fold yoga is similar to Patañjali's eight-fold classical Yoga, which differs only in that classical Yoga begins with ethical restraints and commitments

[32] The *suṣumṇa* is also mentioned in the Mait. Up., 6.16; described in Chand. Up. 8.6.6, and alluded to in Tait. Up. 1.6 and Praśna Up. 3.7.

(*yama* and *niyama*), and includes posture (*asana)* but not *tarka* (YS 2.29). Meditation on the mystical syllable *Om* is recommended by these *upaniṣads*, for instance in *Kaṭha* 2.15-17, and *Maitri* 6.21-29. Meditation on the universal sound Om is an important yogic technique in both classical Yoga and the yogas of the *Yoga-upaniṣads*.

In the *Śvetaśvatara*, another of the principle *upaniṣads*, yoga is prescribed for the realization of *Brahman*, which pervades all things "as oil in sesame seeds, as butter in cream..." (Śvet. Up. 1.15-16). The *Śvetaśvatara Upaniṣad* describes the means and results of yoga practice, indicating how meditative posture, control of breath, and withdrawal of the senses contribute to liberation:

> Holding his body steady with the three
> [upper parts: head, chest and neck] erect,
> And causing the senses with the mind to enter into the heart,
> A wise man with the Brahma-boat should cross over
> All the fear-bringing streams.
>
> Having repressed his breathings here in the body,
> and having his movements checked,
> One should breathe through his nostrils with diminished breath.
> Like the chariot yoked with vicious horses,
> His mind the wise man should restrain undistractedly.
> Śvet. Up. 2.8-9

Although liberation is the highest aim of upaniṣadic yoga, the *upaniṣads* note the health benefits of yoga: Sickness, old age and death are avoided by one "who has obtained a body made out of the fire of yoga" (Śvet. Up. 2.12), and health is named as one of the signs of progress in yoga (Śvet. Up. 2.13). The *Śvetaśvatara* refers to yoga in connection with Samkhya. In the later systematizations of the classical *darśanas*, Saṃkhya and Yoga are separate but

closely related. In the *Śvetaśvatara Upaniṣad*, they designate two means of attaining knowledge of the Absolute; in Robert Hume's translation, the terms *saṃkhya* and *yoga* are rendered as "discrimination" and "abstraction" respectively (Śvet. Up. 6.13).[33] In the *Bhagavadgīta*, the final pre-classical yoga text examined here, Lord Kṛṣṇa teaches Arjuna of a two-fold path: "the knowledge-yoga of the Saṃkhyas" (*jñanayogena saṃkhyanaṁ*), and the "action-yoga of the Yogins" (*karmayogena yoginam*) (BhG 3.3).

Body and Yoga in the Bhagavadgīta

K.N. Upadhyaya writes that the *Bhagavadgīta* subordinates Saṃkhya's dualism and atheism, along with the method of yoga, under the theistic and non-dualistic philosophy of Vedanta.[34] In the *Bhagavadgīta's* Karma Yoga, the yoga of non-attached action, the body is the very instrument of the aspirant's carrying out responsibilities in the world, but with an attitude of non-attachment or desirelessness. While action is necessary in human life, salvation requires *niśkama karma*, performance of action without attachment to its fruit.

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[33] Robert Ernest Hume, *The Thirteen Principle Upanishads* (London: Oxford University Press, 1877, 1965) 410.

[34] Kashi Nath Upadhyaya, *Early Buddhism and the Bhagavadgīta* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1971, 1983) 124.

Renunciation is not renunciation of action itself, but of the fruit of one's actions: *phalat-tṛṣṇa-vairagya* [*phala*: 'fruit'; *tṛṣṇa*: 'thirst'; *vairagya* 'absence of passion']. The battlefield, the setting of Arjuna's instruction by Lord Kṛṣṇa, grounds the *Gīta* in a concrete realm where the warrior Arjuna is at first overwhelmed by the meaning of a situation in which the body predominates: the physical action Arjuna chooses shall determine the physical survival or annihilation of his kinsmen in the opposing army. This dilemma occasions Kṛṣṇa's teaching that the true self is not the body. The true self is eternal, neither dies nor is born, but is reborn in new bodies (BhG 2.20-22).

Kṛṣṇa exhorts Arjuna: "Fixed in yoga, do thy work... Yoga is skill in action" (BhG 2.48,50). Kṛṣṇa's instructing Arjuna to *act*, to carry out his duty regardless of the consequences --the killing of his kinsmen-- exemplifies Karma Yoga's yoking of physical action with detached understanding. Physical action is to be performed *in a fully aware and disciplined manner*, with the matter of significance being not the outward action and its consequences, but the knowledge accompanying the action. Knowledge permits performance of the action with mental equipoise --without desire or aversion-- and this state of equanimity permits and in part constitutes the aspirant's liberation and union with God.

A central conception of the person in the *Gīta* is that of the body as a "field" and the one who knows this, "the knower of the field" (BhG 13.1-3). Koller describes this image as

> ...a field of interacting energies of different kinds and intensities, a field which is simultaneously interacting with innumerable other fields." The body-mind is a juncture or constellation of these interactions, born and reborn out of successively intersecting energy-fields.[35]

Yoga in the *Bhagavadgīta* does not have the *Yogasutras*' technical meaning of yoga as cessation of the modifications of the mind. The predominant meaning of yoga in the *Gīta* is "the disinterested and selfless discharge of one's duty."[36] Upadhyaya identifies a number of other meanings of yoga in the *Gīta*. In devotional terms, yoga is used to mean total surrender to God. In some verses, God's wondrous powers are called *yoga-maya*. Finally, yoga is also used in the *Gīta* in the sense of controlling the mind and practicing contemplation, which is the meaning of yoga later articulated in Patañjali's classical Yoga.[37] Dasgupta suggests that use of the word yoga in the *Gīta* has meanings conforming with both *yuj samadhau*, pertaining to meditative concentration, and *yujir yoge*, yoking or connecting. He maintains both these connotations of yoga serve the *Gīta*'s purpose of prescribing a middle path between a meditative life that is disengaged from worldly responsibility, and the orientation to sacrificial action of a vedic worshipper. The Gīta's type of yogin both meditates and acts, but he acts only to carry out his responsibilities,

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[35] Koller, "Human Embodiment," in *Self as Body*, 46.

[36] Upadhyaya, *Early Buddhism and The Bhagavadgita*, 122.

[37] Upadhyaya, *Early Buddhism and the Bhagavadgita*, 122-23.

eradicating any attachment to the pleasant or unpleasant consequences of his actions.[38]

Although Karma Yoga is the predominant form of yoga in the *Gīta*, other traditions of yoga are incorporated as well. The *Gīta* refers to *asana* and *praṇayama* (BhG 6.10ff), and gives succinct instructions for Dhyana Yoga, the yoga of concentration and meditation. The *Bhagavadgīta* offers a choice of yogas or paths for persons of different natures:

> In this world there is a two-fold basis
> Taught anciently by me O Blameless One (Arjuna).
>
> The knowledge-yoga of the Saṃkhyas (*jñanayogena saṃkhyanaṃ*),
> the action-yoga of the yogins (*karmayogena yoginam*).
> BhG 3.3

Saṃkhya theory and yoga practice in the *Gīta* represent *Jñana* (knowledge) Yoga and *Karma* (action) Yoga respectively. The two paths are of equal value and have the same destination. *Bhakti Yoga*, the yoga of devotion, can be practiced through either Jñana Yoga or Karma Yoga, i.e., the path of knowledge or the path of service. Kṛṣna instructs:

> By devotion to me he comes to know
> How great and who I am in truth,
> Then having known me in truth
> He enters into me immediately.
> BhG 18.55

Significant in all these treatments of yoga in the *Gīta* is the idea that

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[38] Dasgupta, *History of Indian Philosophy*, 2:443.

knowledge is the foremost requirement for liberation; the various yogas both require and cultivate knowledge permitting discriminative, and hence liberative knowledge. While the *Bhagavadgīta* designates the path of liberative knowledge as *saṃkhya*, and the path of action as *yoga*, these references do not pertain to Saṃkhya and Yoga as formal systems, for they were not yet articulated as *darśanas*.

Saṃkhya and Classical Yoga

Saṃkhya and Yoga[39] are among Indian philosophy's nine major *darśanas* (schools or 'viewpoints', √*dṛś*, 'to see'). They are generally treated as a pair, with Saṃkhya providing a metaphysics and Yoga a system of practical discipline culminating in the attainment of liberative knowledge. In general, classical Yoga presupposes Saṃkhya's metaphysical principles, but Saṃkhya and Yoga differ at points in their terminology, doctrine, interpretations, and method.

Saṃkhya and Yoga hold that liberation is attained by discriminative knowledge (YS 2.26, 28; SK 64). Discriminative knowledge, which Yoga calls *vivekakhyati*, is of a higher order than the three ordinary means of knowledge admitted by Saṃkhya and Yoga: perception, inference, and scriptural authority (SK: 4; YS 1.7). *Vivekakhyati* permits discrimination of the true self, whose nature is consciousness, from the mind/body, intellect, and ego. The prescribed

[39] *Please note*: *Yoga* (capitalized) denotes Patañjali's classical Yoga, unless otherwise designated.

method of liberation is a major difference between Saṃkhya and Yoga: Saṃkhya directly recommends discriminative knowledge as the means of liberation, while Yoga emphasizes practical methods of self-purification and concentration leading to attainment of discriminative knowledge. Their main doctrinal difference is that Yoga accepts God, *Iśvara* by name, while Saṃkhya makes no mention of the existence of God.

The main Saṃkhya text, the *Saṃkhya-karika* of Iśvarakṛṣṇa (c. 2nd C. c.e.) begins with addressing the problem of the threefold suffering, categorized in Gauḍapada's *Saṃkhya-karika-bhaṣya* as internal, external, and divine. Internal misery is of two kinds: bodily, resulting from the disorder of the body's constituents, and mental, arising from association with the undesired and separation from the desired. External misery originates from the influence of living beings and objects in the world, and divine misery comes from the gods or cosmic forces. Misery occasions inquiry into the means of counteracting misery, and Saṃhkya counters the objection that means are available in forms such as medical science, on the grounds that such means don't provide absolute and final relief (SK 1). Scriptural knowledge too is imperfect and ineffective, but a superior method of resolving suffering is discriminative knowledge of the manifest, the unmanifest, and the knower:

> *dṛṣtavad anaśravaikah sa hy aviśuddhikṣayatiśayayuktah*
> *tadviparītah śreyan vyaktavyaktajñavijñanat*
>
> The revealed (or scriptural, means of removing the torment) are like the perceptible (-i.e., ultimately ineffective), for they are connected with impurity, destruction and excess; a superior method, different from

> both, is the (discriminative) knowledge of the manifest (*vyakta*), the unmanifest (*avyakta*), and the knowing one (or knower -i.e., *puruṣa*. SK 2

Experience and ordinary knowledge is possible only by 1) *prakṛti*'s affording the material ground of experience (the manifest universe and the embodied human being with its sensory-perceptual capacities), combined with 2) the power of consciousness provided by *puruṣa*. The co-operation of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* is likened in the *Saṃkhya-karika* as that of a lame person and a blind one. *Puruṣa* lacks *prakṛti's* power to physically act, and *prakṛti* lacks "vision" --consciousness. The relation of *prakṛti* and *puruṣa* is problematic; a major difficulty is that faced by ontological dualisms; in the case of Saṃkhya-Yoga: If the two primordial entities are of wholly different natures --*prakṛti* unconscious and *puruṣa* conscious-- how can they interact? Subsequent chapters address principles, problems, and implications of Yoga's treatment of the body; for now we may note the basic dualistic view of person and body in Saṃkhya and Yoga. The person, like everything else in the world, results from the relation of *puruṣa*, pure spirit or consciousness, with *prakṛti*, primal matter. The body-mind is of the nature of *prakṛti*: unconscious, always changing, and illuminated only by the light of *puruṣa*. The true self is *puruṣa*, consciousness entirely free of the body and of any involvement with materiality.

Yoga's religious aim is grounded in the Saṃkhya metaphysics and shares Saṃkhya's emphasis on knowledge as the means of liberation. Self-identity is the main object of iiberative knowledge. Realization of self-identity

is the restoration of the unencumbered pure nature of the self as consciousness or *puruṣa*. The soteriological meaning of "realization" may be illuminated by recognizing both its epistemic and ontological dimensions. Ontologically, realization denotes an entity's becoming and being, as in "the realization of a goal." The epistemic meaning of realization pertains to cognition: To realize is to gain understanding, by attaining or recovering knowledge. It is characteristic of the Indian religious and philosophical traditions to hold that knowledge can and should serve soteriological ends. Such is the case in Yoga, whose theory and practice support the cultivation of liberative knowledge, and the powers of knowing by which liberative knowledge may be gained.

Epistemic realization serves the purposes of ontological realization in Yoga. Higher knowledge (*viveka-khyati*, discriminative wisdom), cultivated by practice of the eight limbs of yoga, makes possible self-realization: *Knowing* and the *attainment* of the person's real nature as pure Consciousness, *puruṣa*, free of entanglement in *prakṛti*. On the interpretation of liberation as healing, Yoga's remedy for the dis/ease of human bondage is the dispersion of the ignorance whereby one conceives one's self-identity in terms of the evolutes of *prakṛti*: ego, mind, body, experience and the objects of experience. Co-extensive with dispersion of ignorance and achievement of discriminative awareness is attainment of Yoga's soteriological goal. Liberation, called *kaivalya*, "independence," is the establishment of self-nature as unfragmented consciousness, free of the limitations and suffering imposed by material nature. A very different

perspective on body and material nature exists in Āyurveda, which is also grounded in Saṃkhya (among other systems).

BODY IN ĀYURVEDIC MEDICINE

Āyurveda is called "a principal architect of the Indian view of person and body" by psychoanalyst Sudhir Kakar.[40] Based on his three years of fieldwork investigating India's healing traditions, his conclusions corroborate the position of the present study that in some significant ways, Āyurveda's approach to the body diverges from traditional religio-philosophical views. Although Yoga is well-known for supporting the health of body, Āyurveda, India's traditional system of health-care and medicine, is actually the Indian *śastra* or discipline directly concerned with health and healing. The word *Āyurveda* is comprised of *ayus*, 'life' and *veda*, 'knowledge'. Āyurveda means knowledge of life and longevity, and designates a system of healthful living based on knowledge. For personal health maintenance, Āyurveda makes recommendations emphasizing diet, cleansing and rejuvenative measures, and daily and seasonal regimen. As a system of medicine, Āyurveda has eight branches and is thus called *aṣṭaṅga Āyurveda*:

1) Internal medicine, including physiology and pathology: *Kaya-cikitsa*
2) General surgery: *Śalyapahartṛka*
3) Eye, ear, nose and throat disease: *Śalakya*
4) Pediatrics, including obstetrics and embryology: *Kaumara bhṛtya*

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[40] Sudhir Kakar, *Shamans, Mystics and Doctors: An Inquiry into India and its Healing Traditions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991) 224.

5) Psychology/psychiatry: psychotherapy, dream analysis, demonology: ***Bhuta-Vidya***
6) Toxicology: ***Viṣagara-vairodhika-praśamana***
7) Geriatrics: and rejuvenation therapy, ***Rasayana***
8) Sexology: ***Vajikaraṇa***[41]

Body and physical health and illness are central in Āyurvedic medicine, and while body and health are important in Yoga, Yoga has *consciousness* as its primary subject and agent of liberation. Yoga and Āyurveda are called "sister sciences" by Āyurvedic physician Vasant Lad. According to Lad, practitioners of Yoga may study Āyurveda prior to and along with their practice of Yoga. Āyurveda's science of the body serves to make the body more fit and pure for undertaking the spiritual science of Yoga. Moreover, when yogic disciplines are performed, the activation of stagnant energies in the body-mind may result in physical and psychological disorders that can be diagnosed and treated with Āyurvedic methods.[42]

Yoga and Ayurveda have in common strongly (but not exclusively) Saṃkhya metaphysical foundations, and in many respects their theory and practice constitute applications of Saṃkhya principles. A major difference

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[41] R. K. Sharma and Bhagwan Dash, *Caraka Saṃhita, Text with English Translation and Critical Exposition based on Cakrapaṇidatta's Āyurveda Dīpika* (Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, 1976) xxii. Quotations from the *Caraka-saṃhita* are from this edition.

Please note: Following citation of passages, parentheses contain the volume and page number of the passage in the Sharma and Dash edition.

[42] Vasant Lad, *Ayurveda, the Science of Self-Healing* (Santa Fe, NM: Lotus Press, 1984) 113-14.

between Āyurveda and Yoga is that Āyurveda is primarily directed toward the earthly goals of health and longevity, while Yoga has spiritual liberation as its aim. Āyurveda is not however, without religious roots and applications. Its ultimate source is Brahma the creator, who gave the knowledge of Āyurveda through the *ṛsis* or Seers who produced the divinely intuited Vedas. Āyurveda's claim to divine origin grounds its assertion that it is not limited to any particular culture, religion or period of history. As a source of knowledge it considers itself to have no beginning or end: Āyurveda deals with things inherent in nature, and based on the assumption that such natural manifestations are eternal, the principles regarding medicine and health remain constant, though in application their concrete particulars differ [CS 1:30.27 (1:601-02)]. Yoga is a liberative discipline, a *mokṣa-śastra* whose benefits are also germane across time, place, and circumstances. Though Āyurveda is not primarily a *mokṣa-śastra*, the *Caraka Saṃhita* states that Āyurveda is sacred because it benefits humankind in "both worlds," this one, and the life beyond [CS 1:1.43 (1:26)].

Āyurveda: Knowledge of Life

The Āyurvedic texts present medical theory in the context of the practice of medicine, so the theoretical principles of Āyurveda have to be pieced together and conceptually reconstructed. Jean Filliozat writes that Āyurvedic medicine is a rational system based on experience, and Larson corroborates this by describing the practical operational character of the medical literature,

wherein symptoms and diseases are classified, contextualized with respect to diagnosis, prognosis and so on, then addressed therapeutically.[43] The major texts that have preserved knowledge of Āyurveda to the present day are together called *Bṛhattrayi*, "The Great Trio." The encyclopedic *Caraka-saṃhita was* originally compiled in the first centuries of the common era, commented on and revised in subsequent centuries, and utilized in present-day traditional Indian medical practice. The *saṃhita* or collection of Suśruta is similar in content to the *saṃhita* of Caraka, except that the *Suśruta-samhita* emphasizes surgery.[44] The third major Āyurvedic text is the *Aṣṭaṅga-hṛdaya-saṃhita* of Vagbhata.[45]

The *Caraka Saṃhita* has eight volumes. Its chapters deal with concerns of practical medicine such as pathogenesis, diagnosis, pharmaceutics and therapeutic measures. The first volume, *Sutra-stana*, presents essential principles of maintaining health and preventing and curing disease, thus it is particularly valuable for study of Āyurveda's concepts of health, and the philosophical and religious implications of Āyurvedic medical philosophy.

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[43] Gerald James Larson, "Āyurveda and the Hindu Philosophical Systems" in *Body as Self*, 106.

[44] J. Filliozat, *The Classical Doctrine of Indian Medicine* (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1964) 26.

[45] Cromwell Crawford, "Āyurveda: The Science of Long Life in Contemporary Perspective", in *Eastern and Western Approaches to Healing*, ed. Anees A. Sheikh and Katharina S. Sheikh (NY: John Wiley and Sons, 1989) 11-12.

Caraka describes Āyurveda as "the science through the knowledge of which one can obtain knowledge about the useful and harmful types of life, happy and miserable types of life, things that are useful for such types of life, the span of life and the very nature of life" [CS 1:1.41, (1:25)]. Āyurveda's aim is preservation and restoration of health, and assistance in attaining the four *puruṣarthas* or principles of life: *Dharma* (righteousness), *artha* (prosperity), *kama* (enjoyment), and *mokṣa* (liberation) [CS 1:1.15 (1:19)]. Āyurveda's commitment to the *puruṣarthas* demonstrates that Āyurveda serves the quest for religious liberation and not merely for material well-being.

The origins of Āyurveda are evident in the *Atharvaveda* (c. 1500-1000 bce) honored by Caraka:

> Of the four vedas --*Ṛk*, *Yajus*, *Saman*, and *Atharvan*-- physicians owe their loyalty to the *Atharva-veda* because this deals with the treatment of diseases by taking recourse to gift, propitiatory rites, worship, auspicious observances, oblations, observance of spiritual rules, atonement, fast, incantations, etc. They are prescribed for the sake of longevity.
> CS 1:30.21 (1:598)

This verse emphasizes Āyurveda's use of religious therapeutics, though Āyurvedic medicine transcends the ancient vedic religio-magical therapeutics.[46] The *Atharva-veda* incorporates both medical approaches to healing (e.g., pharmacological) and religious approaches (e.g., prayer or incantation).

> This man [the patient] hath come, hath arisen, hath gone unto the troop (*vrata*) of the living; he hath become of sons the father, and of men (*nṛ*), the most fortunate.

[46] Filliozat, *Classical Doctrine of Indian Medicine*, 187.

> He hath attained (*adhi-ga*) attainments; he hath attained (*adhigam*) the strongholds (*-pura*) of the living; for a hundred healers are his, also a thousand [medicinal] plants.
> AV 2:9.2-3 (tr. Whitney)[47]

Prayers or incantations --often incorporating images of nature, as is characteristic of Vedic texts-- may accompany medical procedures, such as a surgeon's using a reed to open a patient's obstructed urinary passage:

> Relaxed is the opening of thy bladder like the ocean, the resevoir of water - thus let thy urine be released, out completely, with the sound *bal*!
> AV I:1.3.7 (tr. Bloomfield)

Nature has more than a metaphoric role in Āyurveda. Environment is integral to Āyurveda's approach to the cause and cure of illness. Francis Zimmermann's recent study of Āyurveda, *The Jungle and the Aroma of Meats: An Ecological Theme in Hindu Medicine*, presents Āyurveda as grounded in an ecological theory that conceives of the land and the human body as the two kinds of place. Prognosis was informed by knowledge of the influences of climate, season, diet, and custom. Therapeutic intervention had the double purpose of 1) Rendering the environment appropriate to the needs of the patient (by relocating the patient to a climate suitable to his constitution and malady);

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[47] Whitney explains that the 'attainments' (*adhiti*) are the Vedas and objects formerly learned (*adhīta*), "and now, by restored health, recovered to memory" (commentary on AV 2:9.3). This reveals a function of religious therapeutics: wholeness of spiritual insight can be recovered through recovery of physical health.

and 2) Rendering the patient's diet and regimen appropriate to the ecological conditions.

While ancient Graeco-Latin science produced the model of knowledge called natural history, based on classification of species according to empirically grounded distinctions, the concern of Indian taxonomy was the dietetic and therapeutic qualities of the land and its inhabitants. Ayurveda's concept of the person places the human being within a context of "bio-geography," an aspect of the broader register of knowledge called pharmacy. Pharmacy presupposes a whole cosmic physiology: The great chain of foods where living beings --eaters and eaten-- transmit to one another the nourishing essences of the soil. Pharmacy then leads to a superior register of knowledge: physiology, which in the ancient sense embraces

> ...the circulation of fluids in the surrounding world, the rise of sap in plants, the aroma that is given off by the cooking of different kinds of meats, and finally the interplay of different humors within the body.[48]

While Āyurveda utilizes concepts of the person based to a great extent on Saṃkhya and Vaiśeṣika metaphysics, the person as the subject of medical science is regarded within a context of the web of life. Āyurveda as "knowledge of life" refers not just to individual human life, but to the whole

[48] Francis Zimmermann, *The Jungle and the Aroma of Meats, An Ecological Theme in Hindu Medicine* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987) x.

of living nature and the countless pathogenic and therapeutic factors influencing human health.

"Life" in the context of individual health-maintenance embraces more than biological life sustained by medical science: Āyurveda provides a system of hygiene incorporating factors such as diet and seasonal regimen, cleanliness and physical purification, and cultivation of knowledge and attitudes that sustain well-being. Compared with the dramatic achivements of medical science, the idea of hygiene as a significant part of health care is often considered to be on the level of archaic folk remedies. Āyurveda's systematic and sophisticated theory of hygiene counters such a view. While contemporary scientific medicine makes remarkable contributions to human well-being, hygiene remains foundational to health, and the power of medical science to prevent and treat medical problems doesn't replace the simple procedures of cultivating health. Furthermore, scientific medicine is concerned primarily with disease, and its theoretical basis gives insufficient attention to promoting health as a positive state.

Knowledge of *life* in Āyurvedic terms strongly concerns hygiene (Gk. *hygienos*, 'healthful'), the study and practice of preserving health and preventing illness. Hygiene in the Āyurvedic sense of "knowledge of life" is the axis of the ancient medical traditions of Greece and China as well as India. Although

these medical systems developed advanced medical knowledge and procedures, the foundation of each was proper hygienic measures. Plato's *Timaeus* says of diseases:

> ...if anyone regardless of the appointed time tries to subdue them by medicine, he only aggravates and multiplies them. Wherefore we ought always to manage them by regimen, as far as a man can spare the time, and not provoke a disagreeable enemy by medicines.[49]

The *Huang Ti Nei Ching Su Wên*, "The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine," opens with discussion of why people become so decrepit and no longer live to be a hundred years old. The answer: Formerly, they practiced temperance based on understanding the *tao*, and conducted themselves in accord with *yin* and *yang*.

> There was temperance in eating and drinking. Their hours of rising and retiring were regular and not disorderly and wild. By these means the ancients kept their bodies united with their souls, so as to fulfil their allotted span completely, measuring unto a hundred years before they passed away.[50]

The *Caraka-samhita* --along with its extensive presentation of theory and procedures for prevention, diagnosis and treatment by pharmacological, surgical, and other means-- conveys many points of hygiene, such as recommendations

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[49] Plato, *Timaeus*, 89c. *Collected Dialogues of Plato*, ed. Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961).

[50] *Huang Ti Nei Ching Su Wên: The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine*, trans. Ilza Veith (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1966) 97.

for diet, exercise, seasonal regimen, grooming, massage, and maintaining the physique.[51] The commentary, Cakrapaṇidatta's *Āyurveda Dīpika*, states that "Of all the factors for the maintenance of positive health, food taken in proper quantity occupies the most important position" [AD 1:5.1 (I:105)]. A number of verses are devoted to instruction on the taking and healthful utilization of nourishment. For instance, it is recommended that one note the relative heaviness of food, and leave one third or so of one's stomach capacity unfilled, to assist the power of digestion [CS 1:5.7 (I:108)]. In the humble matter of consuming food, Āyurveda reveals a serious implication of the ancient medical systems' emphasis on "knowledge of life": the individual's self-responsibility and power to maintain his or her own health.

Body in Āyurveda

Āyurveda places great emphasis on the individual's particular type of constitution; a holistic theory of the environment, emphasizing the individual's relationship with the environment in the diagnosis and treatment of health problems; a concept of health and disease which incorporates inter-related dimensions of human physiology, psychology, and spirituality; orientation toward sustaining health as a positive state; and the prevention of health problems.

The dominant philosophical bases of Āyurveda are the classical *darśanas* Saṃkhya and Vaiśeṣika, though also present are terms and concepts from other

[51] See especially Vol. 1 (*Sutra-sthana*), chapters 5-7.

orthodox (Veda-accepting) systems --Vedanta, Nyaya, and Yoga-- and from the heterodox (non-Veda-based) *darśanas* Buddhism and Jainism. Larson suggests that the affinity between Āyurveda and the naturalistic philosophical systems generated a mutually influential pattern of interaction.[52] The meaning of *darśana*, "viewpoint," as the designation of the nine major Indian philosophical systems --considered as complementary and non-contradictory despite the differences of their principles and methods-- is beautifully exemplified by Āyurveda's employment of these several *darśanas*. Dash and Junius note that mainly Nyaya, Vaiśeṣika, and Buddhist theories explain physical and chemical processes in Āyurveda, while Saṃkhya is considered to provide a very adequate metaphysics and account of the process of creation.[53]

The Āyurvedic texts have a strongly Saṃkhyan account of the nature of person and body (evident in *Caraka-saṃhita* IV:1, *Suśruta-saṃhita* III:1 and other passages). Life arises from the co-presence of consciousness, *puruṣa*, and primordial materiality, *prakṛti*. *Prakṛti* operates through the interaction of the three *guṇas*, ('strands' or 'ropes') which Larson characterizes as follows: *sattva*, the subtle matter of pure thought, *rajas*, the kinetic matter of pure energy, and

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[52] Larson, "Āyurveda and the Hindu Philosophical Systems," in *Self as Body*, 106-07.

[53] Vaidya Bhagwan Dash and and Acarya Manfred Junius, *A Handbook of Ayurveda* (New Delhi: Concept Publishing Co.) 11.

tamas, the reified matter of inertia.[54] (Vaiśeṣika metaphysics regards guṇas as qualities of substance, but in Saṃkhya the *guṇas* are considered the actual constituents of matter.) All forms of matter, including the human body and senses, are comprised at a fundamental level of the five *mahabhutas* or subtle elements, themselves evolutes of the co-presence of primordial matter and consciousness. In a Vaiśeṣika-oriented account, the body is a collection of atomic constituents comprised of earth (*pṛthivī*), water (*ap*), wind (*vayu*), and fire (*tejas*). The body exists in space, within which the most important dimensions are time, *kala*, and space, *diś*.[55]

Saṃkhya metaphysics grounds the central doctrine of Āyurvedic meta-physiology, that of the *doṣas* or constitutive principles of human psychophysiology and pathology. The three *guṇas* produce the five proto-elements or *mahabhutas*, and the proto-elements combine in three pairs to form the *dhatus* or fundamental elements of the body:

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[54] Larson, "Ayurveda and the Hindu Philosophical Systems," in *Self as Body*, 108.

[55] Larson explains that Āyurveda's use of these Vaiśeṣika notions, implicit in the *Caraka-saṃhita's* first volume, *Sutra-stana*, diverges from classical Vaiśeṣika. "Āyurveda and the Hindu Philosophical Systems," in *Self as Body*, 107-08.

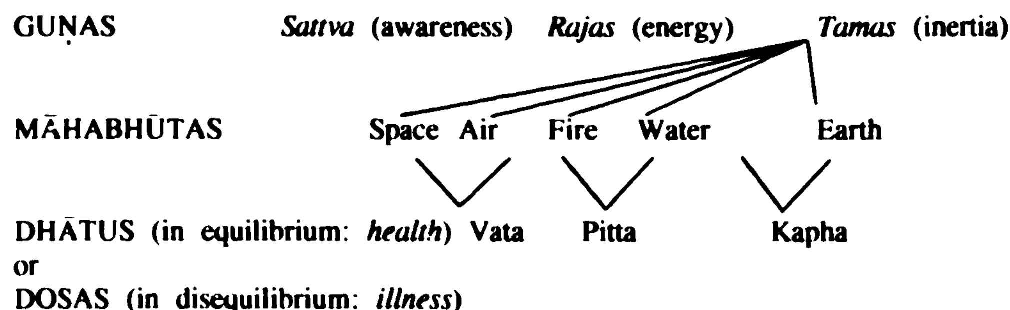


Figure 1: Āyurveda's three *doṣas*

Āyurveda uses the term *dhatu* in two ways. First, the body is held to have seven *dhatus* or basic tissue elements, each derived from the one preceding it in this sequence: *rasa* (chyle or extract of nutriment), blood, flesh, fat, bone, marrow, and semen. The term *dhatu* also refers to the three functional constituents of the body-mind: *vata*, *pitta*, and *kapha*. In a normal and healthy state these three function in dynamic equilibrium, and are called *dhatus*. When one or more of the three *dhatus* is aggravated or diminished, equilibrium is compromised, and the *tridhatus* are called *tridoṣa*, "the three faults," that condition disease.

A major manifestation of the three *doṣas* is the body's systems of respiration (*vata*), digestion (*pitta*), and structural integration (*kapha*). Each *doṣa* has its characteristic functions within the body. *Vata* is the dynamic element in digestion, excretion, respiration, circulation, reproductive functions, speech, and motor activity in general. *Pitta* is the energy of the vision, the

nervous system, and the digestive "cooking" of food in the stomach. *Kapha* is responsible for the integration of tissues and systems, and maintenance of the body's homeostasis. *Vata*, *pitta* and *kapha* are generally translated as wind, bile, and phlegm, but instead of taking these terms literally, they should be understood as the principles constituting and governing the body's systems and functions.

Āyurveda's practice of health care deals with the person as a "tripod" of body, mind, and self (CS I:1.46-47). The tripod metaphor suggests that these three constituents serve as a substratum to support the person's higher nature, but nevertheless, it is the tripod which is Āyurveda's practical subject matter. Human life, according to this rather Vaiśeṣikan interpretation in the *Caraka-saṃhita*, arises from the association of the body, *śarīra* (including its sensory capacities, *indriyas)*, with the mind (*sattva* or *manas)*, and self (*atman)*. This association constitutes the person that is of concern to Āyurveda.

While Saṃkhya and Yoga regard the person's ultimate nature as *puruṣa* or pure consciousness, and their aim is the freeing of this spiritual Self from the body, Āyurveda inclines toward the co-operation of the physical and the spiritual. Crawford comments that "for Āyurveda, spirit and matter, soul and body, although different, are not alien, insofar as they can be brought in a healing relationship with consequences that are mutually beneficial."[56] Ayurveda thus diverges from the position of classical Saṃkhya and Yoga that *puruṣa*

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[56] Crawford, "Āyurveda: The Science of Long Life," 15.

should transcend *prakṛti*. This is a central example of how Āyurveda, because it is concerned with concrete physical problems, embodies and reveals meanings about the nature of the human being that deviate from traditional Indian religious and textual interpretations.

Even though Āyurveda does not draw the same soteriological conclusions from Saṃkhya cosmology that Yoga does, the Saṃkhya philosophy of cosmic evolution is part of the foundation of Āyurveda's conception of the human being as a microcosm within the macrocosm of the natural world. Crawford articulates the point that the "parallelism between human nature and nature at large suggests that humans are in a systemic relationship with the creative forces of the universe..."[57] This point is illuminated by Zimmermann's analysis of Āyurveda's doctrine of humors, the medical formulation of a cosmic physiology dominated by the themes of the circulation of fluids and the chain of successive "cookings" of nutriment by the sun, the cooking fire, and the digestion. The Hindu version of the great chain of Being is a chain of foods, where essences transmitted from the soils, through plants, herbivores, carnivores and man are finally rendered to the gods in the aroma of sacrificial fires. The burning transformative power of the sun, the cooking fire, the digestive fire, metabolism, and the flames of sacrifice are links in a universe of biospiritual

[57] Crawford, "Āyurveda: The Science of Long Life," 15.

metamorphosis, where the meal is a metaphoric ritualization of sacrificing foods in the internal fire.[58]

Caraka's text *Analysis of the Human Body* reveals Āyurveda's conception of the body in a more fundamental way than the accounts given in the *Caraka-saṃhita*. The text does not address anatomy and physiology as we conceive them, in terms of the structure and function of the body's organs and systems. According to Zimmermann, Caraka's analysis of the body is "a speculative pathogenesis, a reflection of balance and imbalance between the humors from which results either growth or wasting of the tissues."[59] Caraka's text *Analysis of the Human Body* begins with a definition of the body as *samyogavahin*, translated by Zimmermann as "a vehicle for congruous junctions." The physician's work is to orchestrate proper conjunctions of foods and medicinal substances with the patient's particular constitution and circumstances --environmental and temporal as well as pathological.
In anticipation of Chapter 2's investigation of meanings of health in Āyurveda and modern western medical thought, following is a brief look at the body in western medical philosophy.

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[58] Zimmermann, *The Jungle and the Aroma of Meats*, 159, 205.

[59] Zimmermann, *The Jungle and the Aroma of Meats*, 168.

BODY IN WESTERN MEDICAL PHILOSOPHY

Presuppositions about the Body

Among the root philosophical presuppositions of the West is Plato's concept of the person, from which arises his exhortation to purify the soul (by means of a philosophical therapeutic) from the prison-house of the body. The body, according to Plato, is the source of obstacles to the attainment of pure, rational consciousness --obstacles such as maintenance demands, sensual distraction, sickness and pain, and motivation toward conflict and war.[60] Nietzsche speaks from the modern period to recognize one of the great mistakes of the Western philosophical tradition: "They despised the body: they left it out of the account: more, they treated it as an enemy."[61] Nietzsche inverts Platonic idealism, and against "the despisers of the body" voices a counter-exhortation to recognize the body's wisdom:

> Behind your thoughts and feelings, my brother, stands a mighty commander, an unknown sage-- he is called Self. He lives in your body, he is your body.[62]

Nietzsche calls for a redress of the Western philosophical orientation operative since Plato, where body is regarded in opposition to mind, where mind is valorized and body is overlooked if not maligned.

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[60] Plato, *Phaedo*, 64c-67b.

[61] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power* [1901], trans. Walter Kaufmann and R.J. Hollingdale (NY: Vintage Books, 1968) 131.

[62] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra* [1892], trans R.J. Hollindale (Baltimore, MD; Penguin Books, 1961, 1971) 62.

Significant among Western concepts of the body are Plato's prison-house, the New Testament characterization of the body as a temple, and the 17th century scientific view of body as machine, epitomized in the thought of Descartes. In these notions of the human body, the metaphor of body as container is dominant.[63] Plato initiated the tradition with the prison-house metaphor, and Christianity contributed the influential image of the body as a temple:

> What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.
> I Corinthians 6:19-20

This New Testament passage presents a dichotomous concept of person as comprised of spirit contained in body, and implies both the sacredness of body and its subsidiary position as a vessel for the spirit. Deutsch points out that the temple metaphor is prescriptive, telling us how we ought to regard our bodies: "It finds its intelligibility within a religious framework of values that sees the possibility of a reverential attitude toward all things in virtue of their divine origin and grounding."[64] Indeed, this message from First Corinthians is a cornerstone of codes of health-ethics in many Christian denominations, including for instance, the prohibiting of tobacco use. The metaphor of the

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[63] Eliot Deutsch, *Creative Being* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1992) 59-60.

[64] Deutsch, *Creative Being*, 59.

body as the temple of the Holy spirit grounds an important element of Christian religious therapeutics: The body is not only given by God, but it serves as the abode of the Holy Spirit, instantiated as the individual's spirit. Thus to neglect the body or engage in activities damaging to it would be sacrilege.

"Container" images of the body are consistent with the speculated etymological association of the English term "body" with the Old High German *botahha*, 'tub', 'vat' or 'cask'.[65] Classical Chinese thought offers a concept of the body entirely different from the "container" image. Ames writes that in classical Chinese thought, "mind and body are polar rather than dualistic concepts, and as such, can only be understood in relation to each other," and that "'person' is properly regarded as a 'psychosomatic process.'"[66] "Polarism" is a symbiotic relation, a unity of two mutually dependent processes which require one another in order for each to be what it is. Dualism, on the other hand, implies the co-existence of two factors of fundamentally different natures, e.g., Plato's *psyche* and *soma*, Descartes' thinking substance and extended substance, or Saṃkhya-Yoga's *prakṛti* and *puruṣa*. Underlying classical Chinese polarism is the presupposition of a single order of being, wherein various

[65] Roger T. Ames, "The Meaning of Body in Classical Chinese Philosophy," in *Self as Body*, 164. First published in *International Philosophical Quarterly*, 24 (1) (March 1984).

[66] Ames, "The Meaning of Body in Classical Chinese Philosophy," in *Self as Body*, 158.

objects and processes differ not in kind, but in degree.[67] Related to Chinese polarism is a commitment to process ontology rather than substance ontology, producing an organismic interpretation of the world as comprised of interdependent and intrinsically related processes. The combination of Chinese process metaphysics with a polar conception of the psychic and the somatic yields a holistic notion of "person" as a psychosomatic process. An important implication of this concept of person is its circumvention of the main problem faced by dualistic accounts of the person, the problem of how two fundamentally different substances or entities --*psyche* and *soma*, or consciousness and matter-- can interact.

Deutsch observes that the dominant Western metaphors of body, besides being "container" images, are generally dualistic and conceptually static, i.e., it is presupposed that the body is an objective given of nature or experience, and that the meaning of "body" can be spelled out in purely descriptive terms. Deutsch argues that the meanings of "personhood" and "body" are found not in descriptive terms, but in terms of "achievement." Person and body for Deutsch are properly understood not as givens of nature, but in terms of how an individual appropriates and integrates the conditions of his or her being:

> *My* body *is* only as it is articulated within my being as a person. The isolable physical conditions of my individual being, in other words, are not my body. What I recognize as integral to me

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[67] Ames, "The Meaning of Body in Classical Chinese Philosophy," in *Self as Body*, 158-165.

> qua person is not this configuration but what, in a way, I have made of it as my own.[68]

Deutsch's interpretation of person and body as *achievement concepts* is an antidote to the tendency of the Western philosophical tradition toward "container" concepts of the body, and points the way to an understanding of the person where body is integral. The metaphysics of René Descartes (1596-1650) is paradigmatic of the Western view of rationality as central to personhood, and mind as separate from and superior to body.

Descartes on Body and Medicine

Descartes' dualistic metaphysics postulates two fundamental substances, thinking substance and extended substance, and thus relegates the human being to a schizoid state, where the mind is valorized and the body is considered as a material object, analyzable in terms of mechanistic science. The Cartesian legacy "has been not only to divide the fundamental integrity of creaturely life, but to depreciate the role of the living body in knowing and making sense of the world, in learning, in the creative arts, and in self- and interpersonal understandings."[69] As we enter the 21st century, the redress of philosophical and functional implications of Descartes' casting of the "mind-body problem"

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[68] Deutsch, *Creative Being*, 62.

[69] Maxine Sheets-Johnstone, *Giving the Body its Due* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1992) 2.

incorporates phenomenological and non-Western approaches to our understanding of person and body. This redress involves a range of disciplines including philosophy, anthropology, and linguistics, and is generating new criticism of and contributions to medical and social theory.

The damaging social effects of Cartesianism supply compelling reasons to challenge it: "This hierarchical dualism has been used to subserve projects of oppression directed toward women, animals, nature, and other 'Others.'"[70] *The Absent Body*, by physician and philosopher Drew Leder, offers a phenomenological account of how Cartesian-type dualism, while misguided and misguiding, is experientially persuasive, owing to our usual state of forgetfulness of our embodiment. Descartes, whose thought was conditioned by and contributed to a mechanistic view of person and world, was extremely interested in the philosophy of medicine. Descartes names the philosophy of medicine as his foremost concern in his first published work, *Discourse on Method* (1637):

> ... I have resolved to devote the rest of my life to nothing other than trying to acquire some knowledge of nature from which we may derive rules in medicine which are more reliable than those we have had up till now. Moreover, my inclination makes me so strongly opposed to all other projects, and especially those which can be useful to some persons only by harming others, that if circumstances forced me to engage in any such pursuit, I do not think I would be capable of succeeding in it.[71]

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[70] Drew Leder, *The Absent Body* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1990) 4.

[71] René Descartes, *Discourse on the Method*, in *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, 2 vols. tr. John Cottingham, Robert Stoothoff, and Dugald Murdoch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985) 1:151.

Another of Descartes' statements pertinent to his interest in medical philosophy is found in his letter to William Cavendish (1645): "The preservation of health has always been the principle end of my studies."[72] Descartes considered his medical philosophy as an application of his physics, which grounds both his medical philosophy and his ethical theory. According to Richard B. Carter, Descartes "envisioned a social revolution based on his philosophy of medicine."[73] Descartes endeavored to apply his science of nature to human beings as objects accessible by the same principles as physical objects. With consideration of how humans use institutions for self-preservation, he claimed that his science of nature could explain the constitution of a "body politic" as ethical to the extent that it accords with the natural principles of cosmogenesis and embryogenesis.[74]

Descartes was concerned to demonstrate that the self is a thinking being, devoid of spatial characteristics, and capable of existing independently of the body. The entire title of Descartes' Meditations is *Meditations on First Philosophy, in which are demonstrated the existence of God and the distinction between the human soul and the body*. None of the *Meditations*, however,

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[72] Cited in Richard B. Carter, *Descartes' Medical Philosophy* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983) 7.

[73] Carter, *Descartes' Medical Philosophy*, 8.

[74] Carter, *Descartes' Medical Philosophy*, 22.

treats the living body in detail, though the human body is a predominant theme in other works of Descartes, notably his *Discourse on Method* (1637), *Description of the Human Body* (published posthumously in 1664), and his final work, *Passions of the Soul* (1649). The second meditation is entitled "The nature of the human mind and that it is more easily known than the body." This meditation does not in fact discuss the nature of the *human* body, but rather addresses the nature of *physical* bodies and our knowledge of them. By way of example, Descartes presents the case of a piece of beeswax, which after melting loses its particular shape, color, scent, and resonance, and retains only its extension in space. Spatial extension is known by reason, not by the senses, and Descartes regarded extension as the essential property of objects in the category of substance he calls matter, *res extensa* (extended stuff), and distinct from the category of substance he calls mind, *res cogitans* (thinking stuff).

Descartes' physics is concerned with the "body" in general, i.e., *substance*, of which particular physical "bodies" are comprised. His physical theory of the generation of the cosmos provided paradigms for both his medical theory of the embryogenesis of the human body, and his ethical theory of the generation of a healthy "body politic." His medical philosophy applies principles of his mathematical physics of general body to the living human body, each of which is united with a soul. Descartes conceived the anatomy of the human body from the standpoint of its fitness to carry out the

intellectual operations of the mind. In the same way that medicine is the science of maintaining the human body's organization so that it can carry out the operations of the mind, ethics, in Descartes' view, is the science of maintaining the organized cooperation of groups of persons as a political body.[75]

In the opening paragraph of his *Description of the Human Body*, Descartes expresses the view that both ethics and medicine are informed by our knowledge of ourselves, specifically of the respective functions of soul and body.[76] Descartes' letters to to his Jesuit disciple Père Mesland distinguishes physical body from human body on the basis of the human body's "disposition" to receive the human soul. The first letter (1645) stipulates that body in general means "a determined part of matter, and at the same time, the quantity of matter of which the universe in composed." Descartes next states that what is meant by "human body" is not a determinate portion of matter, but "all the matter that is united together with the soul of man... and we believe that this body is whole while it has all the dispositions required for conserving this union."[77] Descartes supports his view that the self is incorporeal by his method of methodological doubt in the *Meditations*. In doubting everything that can be doubted in order to seek an indubitable starting point for knowledge, Descartes

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[75] Carter, *Descartes' Medical Philosophy*, 22-24.

[76] Descartes, *Description of the Human Body*, in *Philosophical Writings*, 1:314.

[77] *Oeuvres de Descartes*, ed. Adam and Tannery, Vol. 4: 161-170, 345-48, cited in Carter, *Descartes' Medical Philosophy*, 96-97.

surmises that anything spatial could be produced by a dream or the deceptive work of an evil genius. He concludes that he himself must exist in order to be doubting in the first place, and from there, he argues that "since he must exist despite the supposition that everything corporeal or spatial is but a dream or a demonic hoax, he cannot himself be anything spatial or corporeal."[78]

Princess Elizabeth of Bohemia challenged Descartes in a letter with a question about how the soul, a thinking substance, can interact with the body when they have nothing in common (20 June 1643). Descartes' reply about an "inexplicable union between body and soul" is unsatifactory to her, and in a subsequent letter (13 September 1645), she requests that Descartes give "a definition of the passions."[79] Johnstone notes that Elizabeth questions Descartes about the influence of emotional turmoil on clear philosophical thinking, and suggests that Elizabeth's criticisms "point toward the necessity of introducing feeling, and hence the body, into the concept of the self."[80] Body for Descartes is the seen body, not the felt body. In ruminating on his experimentally derived conclusion that he must exist as a thing that thinks, Descartes asks, "What is this 'I' that necessarily exists?"

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[78] Albert A. Johnstone, "The Bodily Nature of the Self" in *Giving the Body its Due*, 19.

[79] Robert Stoothoff, Translator's preface to *Passions of the Soul*, in *Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, 1:325.

[80] Johnstone, "The Bodily Nature of the Self or What Descartes Should Have Conceded Princess Elizabeth," in *Giving the Body its Due*, 22.

> Well, the first thought to come to mind was that I had a face, hands, arms, and the whole mechanical structure of limbs which can be seen in a corpse, and which I called the body.[81]

Descartes conceives body in terms of its appearance, not from the standpoint of what later philosophers have called "the subjective body," "the felt body," or "the tactile-kinesthetic body." Merleau-Ponty contributed to the phenomenology of the experienced body, distinguishing between the objective "seen" body and the subjective "experienced body":

> ...we must learn to distinguish it [the experienced body] from the objective body as set forth in works on physiology. This is not the body which is capable of being inhabited by a consciousness... It is simply a question of recognizing that the body, as a chemical structure of an agglomeration of tissues, is formed by a process of reduction, from the primordial phenomenon of the body-for-us, the body of experience, or the perceived body.[82]

In tracing the evolution of the concept of the body through the history of Western medicine, it is clear that Descartes' "mechanical body" dominates early modern medical thinking, and that the "experienced body" emerges as significant in contemporary medical philosophy.

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[81] Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy*, Second Meditation, in *Philosophical Writings*, 2:17.

[82] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Colin Smith (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962). Cited in David Michael Levin and George F. Solomon, "The Discursive Formation of the Body in the History of Medicine," *Journal of Medicine and Philosophy* 15 (1990) 517.

Body in the History of Western Medicine

The history of medicine is a conceptual history of the body. Approaches to understanding and treating the sick body become culturally engrained habits of thought, which in turn engender a metaphysical *Zeitgeist*, claims Maxine Sheets-Johnstone.[83] Western medical theory for the 2000 years prior to the Enlightenment and scientific revolution was based on the Greek humoral theory articulated by Hippocrates of Cos in the 5th century b.c.e. A medieval text, *Regimen Sanitarius of Salernum*, originating around 1140 from the School of Salernum, the leading European center for medical study, discusses humoral theory and provides evidence of its prevailing through the centuries. Greek humoral theory was grounded on Empedocles' theory of the four elements: air, fire, earth, and water, and their basic qualities: heat, cold, dryness, and moistness. Onto the schema of the four elements, Hippocrates' mapped the four elements of living things: blood, phlegm, yellow bile and black bile. Thus he formulated a medical theory grounded in a metaphysics wherein body and cosmos are coterminous.[84] The history of western medicine is a vast topic, and the ideas introduced in the following pages are intended only to establish some conceptual background for comparative inquiry into Āyurvedic and Western concepts of health.

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[83] Maxine Sheets-Johnstone, "The Materialization of the Body: A History of Western Medicine, A History in Process," in *Giving the Body its Due*, 133.

[84] Sheets-Johnstone, "The Materialization of the Body," in *Giving the Body its Due*, 140.

Ancient Greek diagnostic and therapeutic methods, like those of India's Āyurvedic medicine, address the proportionality of the elements constituting both patient and medicinal and pathogenic substances. Like Āyurveda, the goal of diagnosis in the Hippocratic tradition "was to obtain a total unified picture of the patient's condition... because the whole body was felt to be involved in any ill that befell it."[85] In both ancient medical traditions, therapeutic restoration of the proper harmonic relationships among elements and their qualities emphasized the patients's diet, regimen, and environmental, seasonal, and interpersonal circumstances. In Greece as in India, the doctrine of humors is a medical formulation of a cosmic physiology dominated by the themes of the circulation of fluids and the chain of successive "cookings" of nutriment by the sun, the cooking fire, and the digestion. The divergence of the ancient Graeco-Latin and Indian medical traditions is Āyurveda's conceptualization of a vast combinative system of humors and qualities, resulting in enormous catalogues of medicinal substances, while Greek and Latin science produced a natural history wherein abstraction was not combinative and ampliative, but rather classificatory, involving the reduction of specifications.[86] There is a remarkable similarity between Greek and Indian views of the patient not merely as a body, but as person with a consciousness and unique circumstances, who is physically and in

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[85] William Heidel, *Hippocratic Medicine*, 128-129, cited by Sheets-Johnstone in "The Materialization of the Body," 147.

[86] Zimmermann, *The Jungle and the Aroma of Meats*, 120, 129.

other ways part of the world. On such an interpretation of the person, the healing art is concerned with restoring equilibrium within the patient and between patient and environment, and potentiating the body's innate power to heal.

Classical Western medicine (that of ancient Greece, and the European middle ages and Renaissance) regarded the body as "an abstract nomenclatural construct... a subtle body of humours and dispositions; but the perception of its 'nature' conformed more to a classificatory aesthetic than to the truth of its observable condition."[87] In the early modern period, beginning in the 17th century, the rise of empirical science meant a revolutionary change in medicine's approach to the body, symbolized by the study of cadavers, and marked by an emphasis on the concrete structure of the body regarded as an intricately complex machine. While ancient Western medicine held the body to be a sacred entity --and like ancient Chinese and Indian thought-- considered the human body a microcosm corresponding to the whole cosmological order, the early modern scientific approach relegated the body to the status of profane flesh to be empirically analyzed. And where ancient etiological theory thought in terms of the balance and imbalance of qualities within a pre-established system of categories, early modern medicine replaced the schemes of qualities with the principle of causal agency. The paradigmatic example of medicine's

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[87] David Michael Levin and George F. Solomon, "The Discursive Formation of the Body in the History of Medicine," *Journal of Medicine and Philosophy* 15 (1990) 518, 519.

success in refining the principle of causal agency is the understanding and controlling of bacterial disease, based on Pasteur's 19th century discovery of bacterial pathogenicity.

The body, illness, and health were radically reconceptualized in the Western world from the 16th century. With Vesalius' 16th century discoveries in anatomy, and in the 17th century, William Harvey's explanation of the circulation of blood within a closed loop, there was a progressive materialization of the body, as structures and functions were "*organ-ized* into discrete functional systems."[88] ("Modern" medicine was introduced to India during this same period, when the Portuguese conquered Goa in 1510 and established a hospital there.)[89] The mechanistic thinking of early modern medicine remains influential in contemporary medicine. The materialist conception of the body prevalent in contemporary Western medical theory is accompanied by a physico-chemical orientation to the person and to therapeutics, which Sheets-Johnstone says "eventuates in both an eroded sense of self and and eroded sense of responsibility."[90] She lodges the criticism that the paradigm of localization-in-place of the various organs and systems underlies present-day

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[88] Sheets-Johnstone, "The Materialization of the Body," in *Giving the Body its Due*, 142.

[89] N.H. Keswani, *The Science of Medicine and Physiological Concepts in Ancient and Medieval India* (New Delhi: All-India Institute of Medical Sciences, 1974) 25.

[90] Sheets-Johnstone, "The Materialization of the Body," in *Giving the Body its Due*, 134.

Western medicine's organization according to various specializations, contributing to a tendency to treat particular parts of the body without much consideration of their relations to other parts and the health of the whole body and person.

Ancient Western science was holistic, and Āyurvedic and Chinese medicine have remained so from ancient times. However, while Sheets-Johnstone is right to identify a trend of increasing "materialization" of the body in the history of medicine, her account neglects postmodern discourse on the body in the context of medicine, a discourse informed by new co-operating technologies and epistemic approaches. The body as a discursive formation in Western medical history has evolved through a number of models. Levin and Soloman identify the ancient period's *rational body* based on an aesthetic of matrices of dynamic qualities, analytic medicine's *anatomical*, *physiological*, and *biochemical* bodies originating in the scientific progress of the early modern period, and the *psychosomatic* and *psycho-neuro-immunological bodies* of the 20th century. If we consider the human body not just as a biological entity, but as a *discursive formation* as Levin and Soloman recommend, we realize that contemporary Western medical science "has begun to restore the body to the larger world-order."[91]

The factors instrumental in the current evolution of medical theory are both scientific and philosophical. The analytic medical research of the early modern period investigated the tissues of the body with the eye and then the

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[91] Levin and Solomon, "The Discursive Formation of the Body," 524.

microscope, revealing the structure of the body not just in terms of major organs and systems, but as networks of tissues. Tissues were analyzed in terms of differentiated cellular bodies, and these in turn were probed at the atomic level, and understood in terms of molecular interactions. In the early 20th century, there emerged *psychosomatic medicine* which advocated the unity of mind and body and made use of biochemistry to account for particular disorders originating in a zone between the material body and the "volitional body" or psyche. While psychosomatic medicine advocated the unity of mind and body, "it has failed to overcome the dualism which isolated this unity from its environment --nature, society, and culture."[92] A current discursive formation of *behavioral medicine* defends an implication of psychosomatic medicine that earlier psychosomatic medicine restricted itself from fully supporting: If "mind" and "body" are indeed dimensions of a unity, then *all* diseases are in some respect psychosomatic, i.e., affect both body and mind. Psychosomatic medicine restricted itself to a limited number of instances, e.g., allergy and hypertension, and to a narrow range of mediating instances, notably the tracing of particular diseases to specific personality characteristics.

Behavioral medicine, informed by knowledge of psycho-neuro-immunology and psycho-neuro-endocrinology, provides a new paradigm of the body that works against dualistic views of mind/body and body/environment, and

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[92] Levin and Solomon, "The Discursive Formation of the Body," 528.

individual/population. As we approach the 21st century, research in immuno-competence reveals a new body:

> This dynamic, synergic body is seen as a system functioning in a larger system, a multifactoral network of cause and effect, in which effects also become causes. The body cannot be represented as a "substance." It has become necessary to represent it, rather, as a system of intercommunicatively organized processes, functioning at different levels of differentiation and integration. It represents a growing body of evidence supporting a *new concept of disease* and a much broadened understanding of epidemiology, according to which diseases do not take place in an environment conditioned only by the forces of nature, but occur, rather, in a *communicative field* [italics added], a world, of social, cultural, and historical influences: influences which the proprioceptive body processes as meanings.[93]

The body as conceived by psycho-neuro-immunology recalls the *Bhagavadgīta's* body as a field within a web of countless other interacting fields, and the Āyurvedic articulation of the body as *samyogavahin*, "a vehicle for congruous junctions." Contemporary Western medical thought that begins to dissolve the old dualisms pertinent to person, body, environment and community, recovers principles consonant with those underlying India's ancient religio-philosophical systems.

There is yet another body emerging in the current evolution of Western medicine, one informed by both scientific and philosophical discourse. This is the *body of experienced meaning*, a model of the body which permits an account of how the processes of disease and healing are related to proprioceptively experienced meanings. The success of establishing correlations

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[93] Levin and Solomon, "The Discursive Formation of the Body," 530.

between the patient's phenomenological or experienced body, and the states of that person's medical body, depends not only on medical knowledge, but on patients' abilities to "fine-tune their embodied awareness, their sensitivity to processes of bodily experiencing, and their skillfulness in carrying those processes forward into more articulate, more discriminating meanings."[94]

The emerging awareness of the experienced body in the philosophical thinking that bears upon medicine may be informed by the Indian tradition's guiding principle of cultivation of self-knowledge. Yoga and Āyurveda are resources for conceptual grounding and practical means of cultivating self-knowledge in the domain of health. The extension of the term health can be broadened from its usual application to physical and psychological well-being, to encompass freedom from limitations and from suffering of the whole person, inclusive of the human being's spiritual dimension. Concepts of person and body are fundamental to the philosophy and practice of healing arts that serve the purpose of human well-being conceived as broadly as posssible. What is called for, according to Sheets-Johnstone, is neither extreme materialization of the body nor extreme animism. Further, medicine and the healing arts benefit from deeper consideration of both scientific and spiritual dimensions of human life. Yoga and Āyurveda have much to contribute to such a vision, and the idea of *religious therapeutics* is offered to encourage consideration of the body and health, informed by both medical and religious meanings.

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[94] Levin and Soloman, "The Discursive Formation of the Body," 533.

Chapter 2

DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH IN ĀYURVEDA AND MODERN WESTERN MEDICAL PHILOSOPHY

Inquiries into health and illness have tended to focus more on the meanings of disease, in part because disease demands concrete problem-solving for a multitude of ills, while health is assumed to be a unitary state equivalent to the absence of disease or dysfunction. My concern here is to examine the notion of health as a positive state, without assuming that health is simply the absence of disease. Contemporary scientific medicine has tended to treat specific syndromes to the neglect of addressing the well-being of the whole person. This approach to health and healing is being questioned by many in contemporary medicine and healing arts. Ancient and traditional health-care systems --such as India's Āyurveda-- in general have roots in religious cosmologies that regard the person as more than body or body-mind, but as having a spiritual dimension, and as being part of the natural world and the social world. Traditional healing systems can broaden our view of the nature of the person, and of religious, social, and environmental meanings of health and illness. They can also open perspectives for a more comprehensive understanding of health. The commonality of medicine and religion --at root, the perpetuation of human well-being-- underlies concern for both psychophysical

and spiritual health in religions across lands and times. While I believe that Āyurveda has much to offer as a system of medicine and as a program of self-healing, my task here is not to evaluate the soundness of Āyurvedic medical theory; rather, I follow Gerald Larson's suggestion that South Asian medical theory and practice can reveal new agendas for health and healing.

> What is of importance in traditional medicine, however, is a way of valuing and a way of conceptualizing "disease" and "illness" that is interestingly different from our own and that is not at all incompatible with the rigorous precision of modern scientific methodology.[1]

This chapter presents a set of determinants of health, abstracted from the classical Āyurvedic text, Agniveśa's *Caraka-saṃhita*,[2] and informed by contemporary sources on Āyurveda and modern Western medical philosophy. My aims are to offer a preliminary account of health consistent with emerging

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[1] Gerald James Larson, "Āyurveda and the Hindu Philosophical Systems," in *Self as Body in Asian Theory and Practice*, ed. Thomas P. Kasulis, Roger T. Ames, and Wimal Dissanayake (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1993) 104. First published in *Philosophy East and West* 37 (3) July 1987.

[2] Agniveśa's *Caraka-saṃhita* was revised and edited by Caraka in approximately the first century c.e. Its basic commentary is the 11th century *Āyurveda-dīpika* of Cakrapaṇidatta. Cited here is the English translation of the *Caraka-saṃhita* and *Āyurveda-dīpika* by R.K. Sharma and Bhagwan Dash, 4 vols. (Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, vol. 94, 1976).

Please note: In citing passages from the CS and AD, I give volume numbers of the original 8 volumes of the CS, with chapter number and verse number. Following in parentheses are volume and page numbers indicating the location of the passage in the Sharma and Dash edition.

medical and metaphysical concepts of person and body, and to specify major conditions of health, thus grounding inquiry into the idea of religious therapeutics. Determinants of health are presented here within four dimensions: 1) Biological and ecological, 2) Medical and psychological, 3) Socio-cultural and aesthetic, and 4) Metaphysical and religious. These dimensions have been chosen as useful for suggesting ways to discuss health in various areas of human life. The four dimensions, and the determinants of health presented within them, are not intended to be entirely independent of one another, nor exhaustive.

INQUIRY INTO HEALTH

"Health" pertains to a state of being, but it also names a conceptual rubric, encompassing themes such as freedom from incapacitation, vitality sufficient for successful action, and feelings of well-being. "Health care" is a related rubric covering traditional and contemporary systems of medicine, preventive routines and treatment methods, and social issues such as the economics of health insurance. What we call "health care" in contemporary scientific medicine more often amounts to "sickness care," for medical intervention is more often applied after illness has developed, rather than beforehand to cultivate the person's inherent vitality, and to diagnose and prevent potential problems. Āyurveda emphasizes preventive methods and cultivation of health as a positive state, and provides a complement to the more

crisis-oriented biomedical model. While the biomedical model gives most of its attention to the theory and treatment of disease, Āyurveda shows more concern for the active cultivation of health.

Health is defir:d thus in the preamble to the constitution of the World Health Organization:

> Health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."[3]

This definition has the strengths of recognizing the several domains of human life where health is important, and of regarding health as a positive state, not merely a concept whose meaning is established in relation to illness or disability. Health is equated with "well-being," but the meaning of well-being is left unexamined. "Complete well-being," --perfect health-- is generally thought to be an unrealizable ideal. We tend to think of healthiness as a matter of degree, in that the complex web of relations among material and biological factors seems to obviate the possibility of the body's perfect form and function. Each of us, writes Sontag in *Illness as Metaphor*, "holds dual citizenship, in the kingdom of the well and in the kingdom of the sick."[4]

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[3] "Constitution of the World Health Organization," in *Concepts of Health and Disease, Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, ed. Arthur L. Caplan, H. Tristam Engelhardt, Jr., and James J. McCartney (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1981) 83.

[4] Susan Sontag, *Illness as Metaphor* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1977) 3.

Yet perfect health is exactly what physician Deepak Chopra extends as a possibility through Āyurveda. Working from the vedic premise that intelligence is the basic force underlying all of nature, Chopra's efforts to help restore Āyurveda in contemporary life and medical practice invoke the Indian concept of the true Self which Āyurveda says is "devoid of pathogenicity" [CS 1:1.56 (I:41)]. Chopra writes:

> There exists in every person a place that is free from disease, that never feels pain, that cannot age or die. When you go to this place, limitations that all of us accept cease to exist.[5]

Maharishi Āyurveda is a restoration of Āyurveda initiated in the 20th century by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. Chopra explains Marharishi Ayurveda's recommendations for a range of traditional practices of Āyurvedic physical culture, infused with the mental cultivation of meditation and the waking of body/mind intelligence. The "quantum mechanical body" is Chopra's model of a body of intelligence, which unites the "river" of quanta comprising the physical body, with the "river" of thought that is the mind.[6] Healing in quantum terms is grounded in knowledge (notably knowledge of oneself as a body of intelligence), and utilizes meditation and mental techniques "to control the invisible patterns that order the body."[7] Perfect health may or may not be possible, but at the least, the idea of perfect health calls us to question what

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[5] Deepak Chopra, *Perfect Health* (NY: Harmony Books, 1991) 3.

[6] Deepak Chopra, *Quantum Healing: Exploring the Frontiers of Mind/Body Medicine* (NY: Bantam Books, 1989) 110.

[7] Chopra, *Quantum Healing*, 131.

health would be like ideally. Āyurveda offers practical means of living, thinking and caring for one's body/mind that can help us live with more vitality, calmness, and well-being than we might have imagined.

In clarifying meanings in the relation of health and illness, it is worthwhile to acknowledge the ambiguities that make health and illness poles in a dialectical tension where one or the other may predominate. Our participation in the kingdom of the sick and the kingdom of the well is not as simple as being entirely in one realm and then the other, for conditions of sickness impinge to greater or lesser extents upon states of health, and they even serve to mobilize the forces of health. The presence of disease or disability does not exclude health. As Whitbeck puts it, "a high degree of health is compatible with some degree of disease, injury, or impairment."[8] The "ambiguity of life" is Paul Tillich's term for the source of inevitable intrusions by destructive factors that cause illness and injury. In Tillich's view of the dialectic processes that constitute life, every creative process implies a destructive trend, and every integrating process implies a disintegrating trend. Threats exist in assimilation even of food, breath, and communication. Intrusion of destructive forces, and thus malfunctions --physical and psychological-- are inevitable. Disease, Tillich says, "is a symptom of the universal ambiguity of life."[9] In presenting

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[8] Caroline Whitbeck, "A Theory of Health" in *Concepts of Health and Disease*, 613.

[9] Paul Tillich, "The Meaning of Health," in *Religion and Medicine*:

determinants of health, I note ambiguities inherent in various aspects of health, and point out some of the tensions inherent in embodied human life as revealed through the window of health. An instance of such ambiguity is Nietzsche's startling suggestion that our seeking health without any sickness is cowardice, if not barbarism, for "the sick soul" as much as the healthy one, is needed to inspire self-knowledge and even virtue.[10] Nietzsche's recognition of the ambiguities inherent in human life and health suggests a useful direction for inquiry into the meaning of health; an adequate account of human health should allow for the fundamental tensions, ambiguities and imperfections in human life as revealed in the context of health and sickness.

Health and disease are not symmetrical concepts; that is, the meaning of one cannot be adequately established in terms of the other. Engelhardt holds that the concept of disease is a *pragmatic* concept, a concept by which phenomena are analyzed for the purposes of diagnosis, prognosis, and therapy. Health, on the other hand, is a *regulative* concept, a concept that establishes an ideal and guides inquiry and action toward the achievement of that ideal.[11]

Essays on Meaning, Values and Health, ed. David Belgum (Ames, IA: Iowa State University Press, 1967) 5.

[10] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science* [1882], trans. Walter Kaufmann (NY: Random House, 1974) 177.

[11] H. Tristam Engelhardt, Jr., "The Concepts of Health and Disease," in *Concepts of Health and Disease*, 42-43.

An articulation of health as a regulative ideal is provided by the World Health Organization constitution, which affirms health as a fundamental value for both the individual and for world culture:

> -The enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition.
>
> -The health of all peoples is fundamental to the attainment of peace and security and is dependent upon the fullest co-operation of individuals and States.
>
> -The achievement of any State in the promotion and protection of health is of value to all.[12]

Two influential doctrines of health illustrate descriptive and normative concepts of health. A biologically based doctrine articulated by Christopher Boorse defines health as "functional normality," and uses the terms "health" and "disease" as *descriptive*, value-neutral terms: To say that a person or an organ or system is healthy means that its functions are normal; to say it is diseased means that its functions are abnormal, with biostatistical data providing the criteria of normality.

> ...diseases are internal states that depress a functional ability below species-typical levels. Health as freedom from disease is then statistical normality of function, i.e., the ability to perform all typical physiological functions with at least typical efficiency.[13]

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[12] "Constitution of the World Health Organization" in *Concepts of Health and Disease*, 83.

[13] Christopher Boorse, "Health as a Theoretical Concept," *Philosophy of Science* 44 (1977) 542.

Health and disease on this interpretation are employed as scientific concepts, not normative ones, despite the fact that in general, human beings value health and abhor disease.

A normative doctrine of health is exemplified in Georg Canguilhem's *The Normal and the Pathological*, which uses the terms "health" and "disease" as *normative* terms: Health means that a person functions well, disease means he or she functions badly.

> Man feels in good health --what is health itself-- only when he feels more than normal --that is, adapted to the environment and its demands-- but normative, capable of following new norms of life... ...for man health is a feeling of assurance in life to which no limit is fixed. *Valere*, from which value derives, means to be be in good health in Latin. Health is a way of tackling existence as one feels that one is not only possessor or bearer but also, if necessary, creator of value, establisher of vital norms.[14]

Discussions of human health found in medical and philosophical literature often address a particular dimension of health and neglect others, for instance, emphasizing the capacity to achieve one's goals but overlooking the factor of resistance to disease. Rather than proposing a "definition" of health, I present a range of determinants which can be used as criteria for evaluating states of health, and which identify conditions for thinking about health. In using these determinants as criteria to assess the health of a particular person, emphasis may be placed on some determinants over others, depending on circumstances. For example, in evaluating the health of a child who has no serious medical

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[14] Georg Canguilhem, *On the Normal and the Pathological*, trans. Carolyn R. Fawcett (NY: Zone Books, 1989) 200-01.

problems, growth and development are important criteria of health. In the case of an elderly person with a chronic condition, the degree of pain experienced by the person would be a significant criterion. The determinants of health presented here are applicable across a range of instances, with modifications for specific circumstances. For instance, strength is a criterion of health for both a child and an elderly person, though there are differences in the particular set of abilities required by each.

DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

Biological and Ecological Determinants

Life, Development, and Longevity

Life, rather than death, is a fundamental determinant of health. Health can be ascribed only of living entities, and an essential criterion of health is the organism's prevailing in its life-functions rather than tending toward death. Longevity means long life, and connotes living to great age with vitality. In Hindu medicine, life and longevity are central in the concept of health: Āyurveda means "knowledge of life and longevity" (*ayus*, 'life'; *veda*, 'knowledge'). *Āyus* in the term Āyurveda means the combination of body, senses, mind, and soul [CS 1:1.42 (1:25-26)], but in the compound term *Āyurveda*, *ayus* connotes the support and prolonging of healthful human life [CS 1:1.41 (1:25)]. In Āyurveda, life means not merely biological thriving: the *desire to live* is a determinant of health [CS 1:11.3-4 (1:202-03)].

The term "development" applies to biological growth, but also to intellectual, social, and other kinds of progress in one's awareness and capabilities. Because human beings have high potential for intellectual, social, athletic, creative, and spiritual achievement, part of being healthy means cultivating one's knowledge and abilities. Without such life-long development, one tends more toward stagnation than toward optimum health.

Change is an explanatory principle of the processes of life and development, and of disease and death as well. In biological terms, children's growth and development constitutes change in the direction of healthiness, while impaired development marks problems with health, owing to factors such as inadequate nutrition, congenital abnormality, or illness. Nineteenth-century pathologist Rudolph Virchow regarded diseases not as ontological entities, but as representing "the course of corporeal appearances under changed conditions."[15] Illness is marked by changes in sensations, capacities, and sometimes of appearance.[16] Change is integral to healing as well: to undergo healing is to undergo transformations wherein the normal conditions of life are restored, and to cure is to generate and assist transformations that restore the normal conditions of life.

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[15] Rudolph Virchow, "Natural Scientific Methods and Standpoints in Therapy," in *Concepts of Health and Disease*, 188.

[16] Drew Leder, *The Absent Body* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1990) 89.

Along with conception, death is an ultimate change of state of the physical body. Disease and injury may lead to death, yet there is such a thing as a "healthy death," a death experienced as part of the natural cycle of coming to be and passing away. A prime example is death from old age, where a person is not suffering greatly from the debilitation or pain of a particular condition, but retains a degree of his or her strength and self-sufficiency until the time that the body has aged to the point that one or more systems cease to function. Āyurveda's notion of longevity means more than long life, it means cultivating long life in health and vitality --thus establishing conditions for a healthy death. At any age, "healthy death" identifies cases where a person's powers to thrive are diminished, yet death is accepted with equanimity. The Taoist idea of enlightenment as living --and dying-- in accord with nature's simplicity grounds the notion of healthy death; Chuang Tzu rejected his disciples' plans for his funeral, named heaven and earth as his coffin, and accepted his imminent death without dread.[17] Poems by Zen Buddhist monks, written close to the moment of death, epitomize the idea of dying in a state of health sufficient to permit awareness and expression of one's final experience.[18]

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[17] Burton Watson, trans. *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu* (NY: Columbia University Press, 1968) 361.

[18] Yoel Hoffmann, *Japanese Death Poems, Written by Zen Monks and Haiku Poets on the Verge of Death* (Rutland, VT and Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle, 1986).

Equilibrium

In Āyurveda the meaning of health centers on the the concept of *equilibrium*. Healing involves the restoration of balanced states of being within the organism, i.e., at the level of the *doṣas* or constituent principles of the body, and between organism and environment. Broadly conceived, equilibrium in Āyurveda means the stable and harmonious functioning of "our organs and systems, psyche and spirit, but also a balanced and creative relationship with our fellow creatures and nature as a whole."[19] Āyurvedic diagnosis and treatment utilizes the idea of balance as it pertains to the relationship between persons and their environment and life-circumstances. Dash and Junius note that the idea of balance can apply to relationships with family, friends, work, culture and God. One of the most important applications of the idea of equilibrium in the context of health is the avoiding of extremes in diet, sleep, work, recreation and other activities:

> The body and mind constitute the substrata of diseases and happiness (i.e., positive health). Balanced utilization (of time, mental faculties and objects of sense organs) is the cause of happiness.
> CS 1:1.55 (I:40)

The technical meaning of equilibrium or balance in Ayurveda refers to the equilibrium of the three *dhatus* or *doṣas*. Health on the Ayurvedic interpretation is the equilibrium of *vata*, *pitta*, and *kapha*, the *tri-dhatu*, or

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[19] Vaidya Bhagwan Dash and Acarya Manfred M. Junius, *A Handbook of Ayurveda* (New Delhi: Concept Publishing Co., 1983) 2.

three systematic constituents. Their imbalance constitutes impaired health, and is referred to as *tridoṣa*, the three systematic problems.

> ... The very object of this science is the maintenance of the equilibrium of the tissue elements.
> CS 1:1.53 (I:39)

> As the author himself will say, the disturbance of the equilibrium of tissue elements is the disease while the maintenance of equilibrium is health.
> AD 1:1.53 (I:39)

Applications of *tridoṣa* theory include classification of the patient's psychophysical constitution-type, determined by the predominance of one or more *doṣas*; etiological theory employing the explanatory principle of deviation from the proper proportions of the *doṣas*, and therapeutic measures including pharmaceuticals that act to restore the balance of the *doṣas* according to the patient's constitutional type and environmental circumstances.

> For the maintenance of health, it is necessary that a perfect equilibrium be established with regard to the various forces acting and counteracting on the body. If there is an excessive deficiency anywhere, it has got to be neutralized.... Marshy lands are by nature dominated by the qualities of unctuousness and heaviness. Individuals residing in such places should naturally be required to become used to taking meat of animals of arid climate, honey, etc., which are dominated by qualities like roughness and lightness in contradistinction with those of the unctuousness and heaviness which dominate the climate of other lands. Similarly, one should be required to follow a regular regimen on the above lines in order to counteract the imbalancing forces of these places. The same principle also holds good with regard to the various diseases. For example, if a disease has occurred due to the vitiation of *vata*, then the diet, drugs and regimen are to be habituated in such a manner that they counteract the effect of the former.
> AD 1:6.50 (I:144-45)

Āyurvedic physician Vasant Lad explains the disease-process as caused by *doṣas* imbalanced by factors such as improper diet or smoking, which weaken tissues at particular locations in the body where disease may then take hold. Treatment then, does not focus on eradication of external pathogenic factors, but rather on restoring the balance of conditions and forces within the affected tissues and system, the system surrounding it, and the whole organism.[20] Āyurveda's theory of pathogenesis implies that a determinant of health is equilibrium of the functions that support undamaged tissues and systems, so that they are not predisposed to malfunction when inevitble pathogens are encountered.

Contemporary scientific medicine makes particular use of the chemical standpoint on person, body, and health, and here the concept of equilibrium concerns the balance of chemical substances and processes within an organism. Physiological functions depend on chemical circumstances and interactions where equilibrium can be evaluated quantitatively: Chemical levels in the body can be analyzed by laborarory procedures and judged in terms of a standard range, with readings falling outside the normal range indicative of particular disorders, e.g., abnormal blood glucose levels may indicate hypoglycemia or diabetes.

The pharmaceutical treatment of illness entails introduction of chemical agents into the body, to bring about improvement in functioning, and to relieve

[20] Vasant Lad, "The Concept of Disease Process," Lecture #4, *Lectures in Āyurveda*, audio tapes (Albuquerque, NM: The Ayurvedic Institute).

discomfort. Equilibrium in a pharmacological context does not generally amount to direct replacement of a particular chemical compound that the body lacks (though in some cases this is so). Rather, the restoration of equilibrium by pharmacology consists in chemically establishing conditions that support normal functions of the body, so that they prevail over factors causing malfunction. Āyurvedic pharmacology emphasizes the patient's particular circumstances in administration of medicines:

> It is necessary to take into account the place where the drugs are produced, the physical conditions of the patient, the appropriate dose of the drug, and the seasonal variation as well as the age of the patient.
> AD 1:1.62-63 (I:44)

Adaptation

Medical theorist Claude Bernard, working in the 19th century climate of Lamarck's and Darwin's evolutionary theories, regarded disease as a result of an organism's failure to adapt to environmental insults.[21] Brody and Sobel's systems-theory of health assumes Dubos' position that "states of health or disease are the expression of the success or failure experienced by an organism in its effort to respond adaptively to environmental challenges."[22] The

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[21] Renè Dubos, "Hippocrates in Modern Dress" in *Ways of Health: Holistic Approaches to Ancient and Contemporary Medicine*, ed. David S. Sobel (NY and London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979) 208.

[22] Brody and Sobel, "A Systems View of Health and Disease," in *Ways of Health*, 93n.

systems-theory view of health incorporates various "levels" or domains, through which information flows in a pattern of feedback loops: "...component A influences component B and the new state of B then "feeds back" to influence A."[23] Brody and Sobel summarize the concept of health as "the ability of a system (e.g., cell, organism, family, society) to respond adaptively to a wide variety of environmental challenges (e.g., physical, chemical, infectious, psychological, social)."[24]

Adaptation in the Darwinian sense of reproductive success is one meaning of adaptation, but further, adaptation refers to an organism's having a relation to its environment that is both self-preserving and accomodating of impinging forces. Jozsef Kovács characterizes a healthy relationship between organism and environment as "a dynamic steady state which can be maintained by the living being in spite of changes in the environment."[25] In biological terms, health coincides with the highest stability and self-preservation of the individual and of the species, which in turn contributes to the self-preservation of the ecosystem in which that individual and species participate. In human life, adaptation is not only a biological process but a cultural one, involving the production and

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[23] Brody and Sobel, "A Systems View of Health and Disease," 91.

[24] Brody and Sobel, "A Systems View of Health and Disease," 93.

[25] Jozsef Kovács, "Concepts of Health and Disease," *Journal of Medicine and Philosophy* 14 (1989) 261.

use of knowledge, instruments, methods and institutions that permit successful participation in the environment, and transformation of it.[26]

Adaptation for the purpose of self-preservation is central to Descartes' physics, medicine, and ethics. Descartes' physics is concerned with "simple bodies," what contemporary science calls "masses in motion," and the natural forces that resolve compound bodies back into their original state as simple bodies. In the physical universe, each entity --living or non-living-- acts and reacts to its environment so as to maximize its chances of survival. The living organism, in Descartes' terms, is a compound body formed of organ systems, a mechanism of self-preservation which serves to preserve the functioning and interrelations of those organs. Life, then, is the compound motion of the simple bodies constituting the organism, and medicine is responsible for helping human beings preserve the functions of the body's systems. For Descartes, just as medicine is concerned with relations among the parts of the body, ethics addresses the relations among persons, i.e., living, sentient, compound bodies, so that each might act as an organic part of the largest body, society.[27]

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[26] Kovács, "Concepts of Health and Disease," 262.

[27] Richard B. Carter, *Descartes' Medical Philosophy* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983) 1-4.

In psychological terms, adaptation pertains to how a person responds to life's problems, classified by Maslow and Mittelmann as 1) biological and physical, 2) cultural, and 3) those set by internal psychological demands.[28] An ambiguity in human life and health exists in the fact that while adaptation is generally a criterion of health, there are cases where *failure* to adapt is indicative of health. Sanford gives this example:

> People who adapted to Hitler's Germany of the 1930's appeared "well"; in terms of their particular social framework they were well-adjusted people. Those who could *not* adapt found themselves in a painful condition, and suffered a terrible malaise. They appeared sick and disturbed people, but their very lack of adaptation may well have been their sign of health. It is as though there was too much health in them to adapt to a sick situation.[29]

Medically, disease itself may be adaptive, as in the case of cowpox infection preventing smallpox.[30]

Āyurveda demonstrates that the medical use of the concept of adaptation has been operative from ancient times. Zimmermann translates from *Caraka-saṃhita* 1:6.50:

> Experts in appropriateness try to oppose a regimen of diet and exercise (literally a *satmya*) with contrary qualities to those of the places and diseases in question.[31]

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[28] Abraham Maslow and Bela Mittelmann, "The Meaning of 'Healthy' (Normal) and of 'Sick' (Abnormal)" in *Concepts of Health and Disease*, 47.

[29] John Sanford, *Healing and Wholeness*, (NY: Paulist Press, 1977) 13.

[30] Boorse, "Health as a Theoretical Concept," 545.

[31] Zimmermann, *The Jungle and the Aroma of Meats: An Ecological Theme in Hindu Medicine* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987) 24.

Satmya (*sa* 'with'; *atma*, 'self') translated by Zimmermann as "habituation" and by Sharma and Dash as "homologation" [CS 3:8.118 (1:275)], concerns "what has become beneficial to a person through constant use" (Zimmermann's translation). While biogeographical habituation or *satya* is recommended in a short-term view of the influence of climate, Zimmermann says that "...in the long term, however, the practitioner seeks to obtain an immunity through habituation."[32] This second sense of *satmya* "denotes an intervention made on the patient's body; it has the different meaning of a regimen or remedy which "compensates" for some excess or lack: a person wasting away is fed on sweet food for example." Based on the Āyurvedic notion of body and land as the two kinds of place (*deśa*) Zimmermann uncovers two dimensions of health-promoting adaptation: Compensation using contraries in *therapeutic deśasatmya* (applying particular remedies), and habituation to external conditions in *biogeographical deśasatmya* (concerning the dietary practices of peoples in different environments).[33] Zimmermann communicates the ethos of Āyurveda in this remark about the adaptation-procedure called *satmya*: "The ideal is to accustom oneself to hit on the right choice of regimen, learned doses, and mixture, so that the nature of what is eaten is rendered appropriate to the nature of the one who eats it."[34]

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[32] Zimmermann, *The Jungle and the Aroma of Meats*, 24.

[33] Zimmermann, *The Jungle and the Aroma of Meats*, 24-25.

[34] Zimmermann, *The Jungle and the Aroma of Meats*, 9.

Non-Susceptibility

Biologically, non-susceptibility means resistance or immunity to potentially infectious agents or damaging forces. Cakrapaṇidatta's *Āyurveda Dīpika* or commentary on the *Caraka-saṃhita* gives a succinct definition of resistance:

> Resistance to diseases or immunity from diseases includes both attenuation of the manifested diseases as well as prevention of the unmanifested ones.
> AD 1:28.7 (1:574).

Non-susceptibility is a determinant of health in that an organism's resistance to infectious or other threatening agents signals its power of persisting in its own functions while resisting or overcoming the effects of e.g., microoganisms to which it is exposed. Non-susceptibility is also the principle behind participation without injury in activities requiring exertion. Vitality is at the root of resistance to both biological illness and physical injury; vitality connotes the strength and energy to prevail in one's own being and activities, and withstanding interference from forces in one's environment.

Psychologically, non-susceptibility means a state of mental clarity and equilibrium from which one can respond to pressures from other persons' behaviors and communications, and from within one's own psyche, without extreme reactions of suffering or behavior damaging to self or others. While *vata*, *pitta* and *kapha* are pathogenic factors of the body, Āyurveda names two of the three *guṇas* (principles of matter) as the pathogenic factors affecting the mind: *rajas* (activity) and *tamas* (inertia). The *Caraka-saṃhita* claims as its province physical medicine (not psychological medicine), but nevertheless it

recommends "spiritual and scriptural knowledge, patience, memory and meditation" for reducing susceptibility to maladaptive mental influences [CS 1:1.58 (I:43)].

Vitality, Endurance, and Relaxation

In Āyurveda, the life force is considered to consist in a physiological fluid material called *ojas*:

> It is the *ojas* which keeps all living beings refreshed. There can be no life without *ojas*. It marks the beginning of the formation of the embryo... Loss of *ojas* amounts to loss of life itself. It sustains the life and is located in the heart. It constitutes the essence of all tissue elements. The *elan vital* owes its existence to it...
> CS 1:30.9-11 (I:595)

Although Āyurveda understands *ojas* as a physical substance, the word *ojas* also expresses what we mean by "energy" or "vitality" in human life. Sharma and Dash translate *ojas* as *energy* in this passage of the *Caraka-saṃhita*: "A body possessed of organs having proper measurement is endowed with longevity, strength, energy (*ojas*), happiness, power, wealth and virtues" [CS 3:8.117 (II:274)]. As a physical substance, *ojas* is the essence of the seven tissue elements: chyle, blood, flesh, fat, bone, marrow, and semen or ova.

> The excellent essence of the *dhatus* beginning with *rasa* (chyle) and ending with *śukra* (semen) [or for the female, ova and blood: *śoṇita*] is called *ojas*. This *ojas* is also called *bala* (strength) in the context

> of the medical science. Because of strength, there is stability and nourishment of the muscle tissues and the person remains undeterred in all efforts.[35]

Vitality, from the Latin noun *vita*, life, refers to the force of life. Vitality connotes vigor and strength, and as a determinant of health it represents an entity's strength to assert itself for survival, for meeting challenges and for accomplishing chosen purposes. Strength refers to the power of generating an effect or of resisting force. It is an important factor in diagnosis, for loss of strength is often indicative of compromised functioning, though individuals possess and utilize strength in different ways. Endurance is the power to act in a sustained way when a continued expenditure of effort and concentration is required.

Relaxation and stress are significant factors for health, and the concept of vitality provides an interpretive context for them. Tension and relaxation are complementary poles in maintaining homeostasis. In instances ranging over cellular integrity, arterial pressure, and the person's affective sense of sufficient challenge and rest, vitality requires some degree of tension to call forth action and to maintain or strengthen an organism's capacities. At the same time, relaxation is imperative for preventing more extreme forms of tension that can damage tissues, systems, and psychological resiliency.

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[35] Vaidya Bhagwan Dash and Vaidya Lalitesh Kashyap, *Basic Principles of Āyurveda* (New Delhi: Concept Publishing Co., 1980) 234; cited in Dash and Junius, *A Handbook of Āyurveda*, 34.

Medical and Psychological Determinants of Health

Normality

In contemporary scientific medicine, a widely applied criterion of health is the "normal" functioning of an organ, system, or person, with normality established by comparison with biostatistical data, as articulated in Boorse's theory of health.[36] Normality can be understood 1) In a pathological sense (whether disease is present or absent), 2) Statistically, where normality is defined in terms of deviation from the distribution of a given characteristic in a population, and 3) Socially, where normality is determined in relation to values, e.g., the question of whether homosexuality is normal.[37]

The *Caraka-saṃhita* lists the following determinants of normality as criteria for determining whether a cure has been effected:

- freedom from pain
- normal voice and complexion
- strength
- proper appetite, digestion, nourishment of the body, and elimination
- sexual release
- sufficient sleep at the proper time
- absence of dreams indicating morbidity, happy awakening
- unimpaired mind, intellect, and sense faculties

CS 3:8.89 (II:259)

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[36] Boorse, "Health as a Theoretical Concept," 542-73.

[37] Mervyn Susser, "Ethical Components in the Definition of Health," in *Concepts of Health and Disease*, 95.

Central to Āyurvedic diagnosis and therapy is restoration of conditions regarded as normal for all persons, but achieved on the basis of what is normal for an individual's particular type of constitution. Because an individual's normal structure and function depend on the equilibrium of the three *doṣas* or humors, what is normal for a given person depends on his or her type of constitution, whether dominated by *vata* ("wind", the force of motion), *pitta* ("bile", the force of heat) or *kapha* ("phlegm", the force of stability) or a combination of two of these, or all three.

> The entire body is in fact the abode of all the *doṣas* and as such these *doṣas* bring about good and bad results according as they are in normal and abnormal states respectively. When in a normal state, they bring about good results like growth, strength, complexion, happiness, etc. When in an abnormal state they cause various types of diseases.
> CS 1:20.9 (I:362)

Health and disease in Āyurveda are relative to the normal and abnormal states of the *doṣas*, and hence the absence or alleviation of disease is co-extensive with equilibrium of the *doṣas* suitable to a given person's constitution.

The names of the three humors, or *doṣas*, are to not be taken in literal terms as the substances phlegm, bile, and wind, but understood to represent qualities of physiological structures and functions. The three forces governing biologic processes, when in the normal state of equilibrium that constitutes health, are traditionally called *dhatus*, "supporters" [√*dha*, 'to support']. Disturbance of the *dhatus*' equilibrium is co-extensive with states of compromised health. In

disequilibrium the three are called *doṣas* or "faults" [√*duṣ*, 'to soil' or 'to spoil'].

> There are two aspects of the *doṣas*, viz., natural and morbid. In the natural state, *pitta* helps in living beings' digestion and metabolism. In its morbid state, it causes various diseases. *Kapha* in its natural state promotes strength in the form of *ojas*. When in morbid condition, it takes the form of excreta and causes misery. Similarly, *vata* in its natural state is responsible for all activities of the body. When in morbid state, it causes diseases and death.
> CS 1:17.115-18 (I:334)

Pharmacist and Āyurvedic researcher Birgit Heyn makes the non-traditional, but clinically useful distinction that the term *dhatu* is properly employed to mean "tissue-element," while *doṣa* refers to dynamic bioenergetic principles: "three different forms of energy which govern the whole energy economy in living organisms."[38] As regards *vata*, *pitta*, and *kapha* as psychophysical "types," these are stylized pictures used as a general guide in recognizing the characteristics of each person's nature, wherein a particular *doṣa* generally predominates.[39]

Zimmermann maintains that in ancient Hindu medicine, the humors were conceived within two superimposed standpoints: First, according to an agricultural metaphor, as fluids irrigating the tissues. Secondly, in terms of health and disease, they represent various facets in a combinative system of

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[38] Birgit Heyn, *Ayurveda, The Indian Art of Natural Medicine and Life Extension* (Rochester, VT: Healing Arts Press, 1990) 43.

[39] Heyn, *Ayurveda, The Indian Art of Natural Medicine*, 47.

humors, savors, and qualities possessed by humans, animals, plants and by the soils which infuse plants and animals with their *rasa* (essence) throughout the food-chain.[40] Thus the ancient Āyurvedic practitioner did not consider the three humors --wind, bile, and phlegm-- in a literal sense, but made a leap of abstraction from the level of image to the construction of a conceptual system. This is "the moment when phlegm is no longer simply an image of excessive serosity or unctuosity, but becomes the abstract principle of elephantiasis."[41]

The several meanings of *doṣa* indicate that understanding and application of Āyurvedic principles requires multi-leveled analysis. An important clinical interpretation of *doṣa* is excess material resulting from the incomplete digestion of food. The verbal root √*duṣ* gives the word *doṣa* the connotation of "spoiling" or "impairment." The stomach and particularly the gastric fire may be "spoiled" owing to faulty digestion, resulting in the spreading throughout the body of a sticky substance called *ama*, "unripe" or incompletely digested food-juice. The *sama* ("with *ama*") state of the body is marked by the symptoms of "a feeling of heaviness in the body, sleeplessness, sticky stools and saliva, swelling in the body, aches and pains, etc."[42] Tabor reports the explanation of a Vaidya or Āyurvedic physician who asserts that chronic disorders (e.g.,

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[40] Francis Zimmermann, *The Jungle and the Aroma of Meats*, 169.

[41] Zimmermann, *The Jungle and the Aroma of Meats*, 120.

[42] Daniel C. Tabor, "Ripe and Unripe: Concepts of Health and Sickness in Ayurvedic Medicine," *Social Science and Medicine* 15B (1981) 442.

backache) result from *ama* in the body; acute illnesses (e.g., cholera) have other immediate causes, but proximally, "the predisposition of the body to these infections was held to be caused by *ama* also."[43]

Nirama (without *ama*) is the state of normality and hence of health. It is indicated by signs including lightness of limb, and proper appetite and elimination. Āyurvedic treatment employs measures to return the body to the normal *nirama* state before the administration of medicines appropriate for particular disorders. A major therapeutic strategy in Ayurveda is *śamana* or alleviation therapy: elimination of *ama* by rekindling the digestive fire or *agni* (in modern terms, digestive enzymes and processes, and metabolism). Alleviation therapy includes fasting or light diet, exercise, the drinking of warm water, and adminstration of digestive herbs, singly or in compounds, e.g., dried ginger (*Zingiber officianale*).[44] These procedures reactivate the reciprocally related functions of the gastric fire and elimination, and the "drying up" of excess *doṣas*.

While normality has many applications as a diagnostic criterion in Āyurvedic and Western medicine, Nietzsche provides another perspective on medical normality. The idea of "normal health" in general terms is rejected by

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[43] Tabor, "Ripe and Unripe," 446.

[44] Tabor, "Ripe and Unripe," 447; Lad, *Ayurveda, the Science of Self-Healing*, 79.

Nietzsche. He valued sickness and other morbid states for showing us "under a magnifying glass states that are normal -- but not easily visible when normal."[45] But as for a standard of "normal health," Nietzsche says the concept should be abandoned, for what constitutes health for the *body* (let alone the soul) "depends on your goal, your horizon, your energies, your impulses, your errors, and above all on the ideals and phantasms of your soul."[46] With the forsaking of the idea of a normal health, he says, we may reflect on the health and illness of the soul. The sick soul is really necessary, Nietzsche holds, to provoke the growth of our knowledge, self-knowledge, and virtue. Difficulties and suffering can demand our self-reflection and the exercise of our power. An ambiguity thus emerges in the suggestion that while medical science -- contemporary or Āyurvedic-- relies on a concept of normality as a criterion of health, our "abnormality" may be a generative factor for well-being.

Freedom from Pain

Freedom from pain is a foremost determinant of health, and relieving pain is among the prime goals of medicine. Pain is generally the most prominent and immediate indicator of the presence of illness and injury.

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[45] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power* [1901], trans. Walter Kaufmann and R.J. Hollingdale, (NY: Vintage Books, 1967) 29.

[46] Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 177.

Āyurveda classifies diseases as *exogenous* (caused by external factors, such as fire), and *endogenous* (caused by vitiation of the *dosas*). There are four major sub-groups of disease, because exogenous and endogenous diseases may manifest in mind or body primarily [CS 1:20.3 (I:360)]. As regards pain:

> The exogenous diseases begin with pain, and then they bring about disturbance in the equilibrium of the *doṣas*. The endogenous diseases on the other hand, begin with disturbance in the equilibrium of *doṣas* and then bring about pain.
> CS 1:20.7 (I:361)

Pain more often than not accompanies illness and injury; we associate pain with disease, and freedom from pain with health. However, pain and disease are not co-extensive: Pain may occur to persons in good health, and illness may be present without accompanying pain, e.g., as in the case of hypertension. Leder's phenomenological analysis of the body and its "dys-appearance" in its ordinary states of well-being reveals the experienced dimensions of pain and disease:

> The body stands out in times of dysfunction only because its usual state is to be lost in the world --caught up in a web of organic and intentional involvements through which we form one body with other things. To say that the body is "absent," a "being-away," thus has a positive significance; it asserts that the body is in ceaseless relation to the world.[47]

Our associating pain with disease, Leder says, is not due merely to their physical contiguity. A phenomenological association occurs as well. "Disease tends to effect many of the same experiential shifts as does pain": Disease and

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[47] Leder, *The Absent Body*, 160.

pain bring about disruption of our intentional links with the world, and cause constriction of our spatiotemporal horizons.[48]

An ambiguity regarding pain exists in the fact that pain, while generally undesirable, is critical to health, for it signals the presence of threats to health.[49] Another ambiguity pertinent to pain is the fact that pain often goes unrecognized. This claim might seem surprising, for the meaning of "pain" suggests the characteristic of being *felt*. However, it commonly occurs that persons experience pain, without accompanying awareness of its existence, location, and severity. Diminished or delayed awareness of pain can be a sign of a low degree of body-awareness, sometimes attributable to a high degree of involvement in one's mental processes. (However, the ability to mentally control pain can be an aspect of healthiness). In either case, a*wareness*, discussed subsequently, presents itself as a determinant of health: awareness is both a determinant of health and a resource for protecting one's health.

In psychological terms, pain can be a sign that a person is subject to damaging forces outside his or her control --another's abusive behavior for example-- or it can arise from tensions in a person's own psyche. As Nietzsche says, psychological suffering can have the productive quality of

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[48] Leder, *The Absent Body*, 79.

[49] Leon R. Kass, "Regarding the End of Medicine and the Pursuit of Health," in *Concepts of Health and Disease*, 17.

provoking a person's development. The motive to avoid pain --physical and/or psychological-- can lead to reliance on alcohol or drugs, prescribed or non-prescribed. Physical damage is a possible consequence of substance-abuse, and other kinds of damage can result from abusing drugs, for "their subversion of sober control of one's actions renders them spiritually destructive."[50] Alleviation of pain without reflection on its meaning neglects pain's positive value to provide information about physical health problems, and can also involve overlooking the potential of psychological suffering to incite the development of personhood and maturity.

Wholeness and Integration

Āyurveda's medical holism is founded on a cosmology wherein the person is a microcosm of the macrocosmic world, a position that has religious as well as medical implications:

> An individual is an epitome of the universe as all the material and spiritual phenomena of the universe are present in the individual, and all those present in the individual are also contained in the universe .... As soon as he realizes his identity with the entire universe, he is in possession of true knowledge which stands him in good stead in getting salvation.
> CS 4:5.3,7 (II:414,17)

Āyurveda considers the universe (and all matter in it, including human beings) to be compounded of the basic substances earth, water, fire, air, and *ākaśa*

[50] David M. Feldman, *Health and Faith in the Jewish Tradition* (NY: Crossroad Publishing, 1986) 26.

(ether or space) [CS 4:5.3-5 (II:414-15)]. On this metaphysical basis, Āyurvedic therapeutics aim to restore humoral equilibrium in consideration of influences such as season, climate, and local foodstuffs and medicinal substances. Classical Āyurvedic pharmacology recommends medicinal substances conditioned by the environment, and holds that the *rasa* or essence of foods and medicines (gained from the *rasa* of the soil in which they grew) pervade the *rasa* or essence that is the basis of the human's seven *dhatus* or tissues.[51]

The word "health" actually means wholeness, and "to heal" is to restore wholeness. *Health*, *heal* and *whole* are derived from the Old English *hal*, 'whole', and ultimately descend from the Indo-European root meaning whole: $\sqrt{}$*kailo-*.[52] Holism is a conceptual orientation that recognizes the organic unity and inter-dependence of forces within an organism, among organisms, and among forces at various levels within an environment.

> ...a holistic approach offers a conceptual alternative to the physiochemical reductionism, materialism, and mind/body dualism that dominates much of contemporary medical thought.[53]

Besides its ontological dimension, holism also pertains to function. Kass connects wholeness with *well-working*; wholeness as regards living organisms is not static, but pertains to wholeness-in-action, the working well of the entity, thus the whole organism must be evaluated in order to determine its well-

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[51] Zimmermann, *The Jungle and the Aroma of Meats*, 25.

[52] *American Heritage Dictionary*, Appendix, "Indo-European Roots" (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1981) 1520, s.v. "kailo-."

[53] Sobel, *Ways of Health*, 17.

working.[54] Kass' interpretation of wholeness is more satisfactory than those that would define wholeness statically. By regarding wholeness from the standpoint of well-working, the concept of wholeness becomes more useful as a criterion of health. For instance, a person who lacks the ability to hear can still attain to wholeness by virtue of using means of communication that enable her to carry out projects of importance to her.

In the psychological theory of C.G. Jung, the journey towards wholeness, which he called individuation, is a process of bringing to consciousness meanings previously repressed in the unconscious. Psychological health in Jungian terms entails that one's inner and outer selves are integrated rather than fragmented.

> As long as all goes well and psychic energy finds its application in adequate and well-regulated ways, we are disturbed by nothing from within... But no sooner are one or two of the channels of psychic activity blocked, than we are reminded of a stream that is dammed up. The current flows backward to its source; the inner man wants something which the visible man does not want, and we are at war with ourselves.[55]

Wholeness describes an ideal state, for life circumstances change constantly and require new adjustments and responses. Further, our human potential can never be fully achieved in our lifetimes, and in this respect, achieving wholeness is

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[54] Kass, "Regarding the End of Medicine and the Pursuit of Health," in *Concepts of Health and Disease*, 17.

[55] C.G. Jung, *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*, trans. W.S. Dell and Cary F. Baynes (NY and London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1933) 202.

impossible, because the possibilities for our development are so rich.[56] Wholeness, then, like the concept of health itself, is a conceptual rubric and regulative idea, i.e., an action-guiding ideal. Wholeness is a significant determinant of health, for it sets a standard by which to judge the extent to which a person is fully being and acting.

One way of understanding *integration* is in terms of the concept of wholeness: To integrate is to make something whole by bringing its parts into proper relation. The Latin adjective *integer* (from the Indo-European root √*tag*, 'to touch') means "untouched," hence, whole, complete, and perfect.[57] Integer is the basis of the English nouns *integer* (whole number), and *integrity* (moral consistency and soundness). Āyurveda suggests that integration is fundamental to health by its use of the term *roga* for illness. Roga is derived from the verbal root √*ruj*, "to break", while its negated form, *arogya*, means health. Integration, like wholeness, is more fruitfully considered in dynamic rather than static terms. As a determinant of health, integration pertains to the degree of co-operation within and among the systems, sub-systems and constituent parts of an entity.

Loss of integration characterizes illness and injury in that the affected part stands out in its dysfunction. Leder refers to this phenomenon as a

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[56] Sanford, *Healing and Wholeness*, 16.

[57] *American Heritage Dictionary*, Appendix: "Indo-European Roots," 1545, s.v. "tag-."

thematization: Pain brings the body out of its well-working "absent" state to an experience of intense awareness of the affected part. Leder invokes Heidegger's reference to the "ready-to-hand" tool (*Being and Time* 95-107): The tool remains withdrawn from our attention as long as it serves the purpose of our work, the "towards-which" the tool is used. In the same way that a tool stands forth due to a break in its usefulness, "It is characteristic of the body itself to presence in times of breakdown or problematic performance."[58] Leder gives the example of a man who has a heart attack while playing tennis:

> Prior to the onset of pain... attention is ecstatically distributed to the distant points. Parts of the body are backgrounded and forgotten as all power centers in the swing. A metabolic machinery supplies the player with energy, without demanding his attention or guidance. The game is made possible only by this bodily self-concealment.
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> Yet this structure is lacerated by a single moment of pain. The player is called back from ecstatic engagement to a focus upon the state of his own body. A background region, the chest, is now thematized.[59]

Leder uses the terms disappearance and dys-appearance to characterize the body in its states of well-working and dysfunction, respectively. He capitalizes on the etymological difference between the Latin prefix *dis*, meaning "away," "apart,", or "asunder," and the Greek prefix *dys*, meaning "bad," "difficult," or "ill," as in "dysentery." Disappearance evokes absence, and refers to the state

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[58] Leder, *The Absent Body*, 83.

[59] Leder, *The Absent Body*, 71.

of ordinary functioning where the lived-body is "absent" from awareness due to its ectatic involvement in its projects in the world. In contrast, "dys-appearance" refers to states where "the body *appears* as thematic focus, but precisely in a *dys* state."[60]

Integration characterizes the state of health and well-working, while dys-appearance, the thematized appearance of an impaired part or system of the body, is equivalent to dis-integration in the function of the body as whole. Hegel's definition of the disease state turns on such an idea of integration:

> ...the system or organ establishes itself in isolation, and by persisting in its particular activity in opposition to the activity of the whole, obstructs the activity, as well as the process by which it pervades all the moments of the whole.[61]

In considering integration as a determinant of health, it seems at first a simple matter that integration is a mark of health, and disintegration a mark of illness. But Leder's analysis reveals that both illness and health involve a certain kind of disintegration that takes the form of alienation from one's own body:

> Both exhibit an element of alienation from the body. In the case of health, the body is alien by virtue of its disappearance, as attention is primarily directed toward the world. With the onset of illness this gives way to dys-appearance. The body is no longer alien-as-forgotten, but precisely as-remembered, a sharp and searing presence threatening the self. One is a mode of silence,

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[60] Leder, *The Absent Body*, 84, 86-87.

[61] G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophy of Nature*, trans. Michael John Perry (NY: Humanities Press, 1970) Vol. 3:193; cited in Leder, *The Absent Body*, 88.

> the other a manner of speech, yet they are complementary and correlative phenomena.[62]

Leder's insight is useful to understanding yet another of the ambiguities inherent in the experience of human health and illness: Health can permit a degree of integration with our projects (whether in the world or in the spiritual domain) that diminishes the integration of body with consciousness. For instance, classical Yoga cultivates health as a condition for meditative practice aimed at *dis-integration* of bonds keeping the consciousness connected with body and senses.

Awareness and Mental Clarity

Awareness in the context of health has a number of applications. A healthy organism has capacities for sensory awareness, while illness or injury can interfere with the organism's ability to register information in its environment. An extreme example is loss of consciousness due to injury or illness, and gradual loss of awareness is one of the signs of impending death. *The Bṛhadaranyaka Upaniṣad* describes the soul at death as becoming "non-knowing of forms": "He is becoming one," they say, "he does not see... (smell, etc.)" (Bṛhad. Up. 4:4.1-2). The *Chandogya Upaniṣad* (6:15.1) describes how the kinsmen of a dying person gather and ask "Do you

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[62] Leder, *The Absent Body*, 91.

know me?" for in dying, one loses awareness sufficient even to recognize one's loved ones.

Among the criteria for evaluating whether a cure has been effected, the *Caraka-saṃhita* lists "unimpairment of mind, intellect, and senses" [CS 3:8.89 (II:259)]. The Hindu traditions, in various terms, uphold the position that intelligence or consciousness is the person's true nature, and that discriminative wisdom is the remedy for the ignorance, suffering, and bondage that is human life. Thus it is not surprising that Āyurveda considers the pain of illness to result from ignorance, and holds that clarity of mind is a determinant of health. Clarity of mind in the context of health is an ordinary kind of knowledge, not a form of higher knowledge leading to religious liberation, but mental clarity contributes to liberation from the suffering of illness:

> ...the ignorant indulge in unwholesome gratification of the five senses... and adoption of such regimes as are pleasing only temporarily; but the wise do not indulge in them because of their clarity of vision.
> CS 1:28.39-40 (I:582)

Awareness is a determinant of health, and a capacity that contributes to the maintenance of health: Āyurvedic medical theory implies that knowledge of one's own nature, and the dietary, climatic, temporal and other patterns suited to oneself helps one follow the proper regimen to preserve one's health. The *Caraka-saṃhita* gives this analogy to illustrate the principles of self-awareness and responsibility for one's state of health: "As an incompetent king neglects his enemy, so also an ignorant person does not realize the need to take care of the disease in its primary stage due to his negligence" [CS 1:11.57 (I:232)].

Awareness of one's normal functioning and deviations from it can help one sustain a higher level of health, and recognize circumstances that signal a need for adjustment in one's actions or a need for medical assistance.

In the domain of psychological health, awareness and clarity of mind are antipodal to neurosis and psychosis. Psychological disorders involve internal conflicts far from transparent to their sufferer, and psychosis is marked by interference in a person's contact with reality. An important dimension of mental health is a person's awareness of his or her own thoughts and feelings, and a certain degree of awareness (free of projection and other neurotic interpretations) of others' thoughts and feelings. Psychological health entails mental clarity sufficient for responding appropriately to experiences and communications. In contrast, neurotic behavior is often impelled by interpretations fueled by unconscious inner tensions, and thus can be inappropriate to a given situation. Inner psychological tensions spring from and produce suffering, and neurotic or psychotic behaviors tend to produce further suffering in both the subject and those with whom he or she interacts. The Hindu-Buddhist postulate that suffering is rooted in ignorance is supported by the efficacy of psychotherapy to relieve psychological suffering through replacing nescience of one's own psyche with self-understanding.

Besides the direct applications of awareness for attainment and preservation of health, awareness --in contradistinction to self-deception--

is an aspect of having a healthy connection with truth in the achievement of personhood. Deutsch articulates self-deception as follows:

> Self-deception is a refusal to acknowledge who I am and what I am doing, not out of simple ignorance but from what appears to be a kind of unselfconscious willful perversity.[63]

Deutsch develops Fingarette's view of self-deception, "that the deceiver is one who refuses to spell out, to avow, some feature of his engagement with the world."[64] Deutsch distinguishes a number of forms of self-deception, which in its primary forms involves

> ... breakdown of an individual's capacity to be responsible, to be able (and not just unwilling) to acknowledge the actualities of his or her personal identity making and to exercise one's inherent powers to strive toward integration and freedom.[65]

If we conceive health broadly as well-being encompassing the achievement of personhood, Deutsch's thought on self-deception shows how well-being is countered by self-fragmentation. Self-deception as a form of metaphysical illness finds intelligibility within an understanding of health whose determinants include integration, and metaphysical considerations about identity and freedom.

Finally, the ability to learn has its genesis in awareness. An organism's health is reflected in, and protected by, its ability (appropriate to its species and

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[63] Eliot Deutsch, *Creative Being* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press) 33.

[64] Deutsch, *Creative Being*, 235-36 n1. See Herbert Fingarette, *Self-Deception* (NY: Humanities, 1969).

[65] Deutsch, *Creative Being*, 236 n2.

situation) to interpret experience and retain knowledge, for purposes ranging from survival to high levels of insight, creativity, and problem-solving. Because of the human being's potential for higher order thinking, aesthetic experience and so on, the ideal of a high degree of health entails development of the mind's capacities and the exercise of creative potential. The ideal of cultural health thus requires that societies have effective schools for the cultivation of human intelligence and its applications, especially for the young, but ideally for life-long learning.

Socio-Cultural and Aesthetic Determinants of Health

Relationality

Relationality signifies relationships of various kinds: interpersonal, between person and society, among social groups and nations, and between persons and other kinds of beings (living and non-living) that constitute the world. Psychology and sociology investigate relations among persons and groups, social theorists discuss relationality in the socio-political domain, and ethicists in terms of morality. But relationality can be understood in some other and interestingly subtle ways.

Self-sufficiency is a determinant of health, and in evaluating a person's health, a question to ask is how much a given condition interferes with the person's ability to act independently to accomplish his or her purposes. A limited capacity to act can indicate a compromised state of health, while health

as a positive state is relative to the power to act in one's own behalf to meet one's needs and desires. Moreover, because our humanity entails the duties and benefits of community life, vitality can be employed in one's work and social service to contribute to the well-being of others. Self-sufficiency is important to health, but its necessary condition is relationality, a concept that unfolds meanings of health as regards person, species, environment, and community.

The notion of "social determinants of health" suggests two main themes, first, social factors as they bear on medical health. It was in this connection that Descartes envisaged a social revolution based on medicine, consonant with Virchow's concept of the role of health in democratic government:

> The democratic state desires that all its citizens enjoy a state of well-being, for it recognizes that they all have equal rights... However, the conditions of well-being are health and education, so it is the task of the state to provide on the broadest possible basis the means for maintaining and promoting health and education through public action...[66]

The second theme emergent in the idea of social determinants of health is the one emphasized here: perspectives on what it means to be healthy in context of human social and cultural life, i.e., creation of meanings based on values concerning relationality and aesthetics. For varied insights into relationality, we may turn to sources including Āyurveda, Neo-Confucianism, and indigenous religious cosmologies, such as that of the Lakota (Sioux), of the northern U.S. plains region. Leder's study of medical and philosophical dimensions of the

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[66] Rudolf Virchow, cited in Carter, *Descartes' Medical Philosophy*, 5-6.

body utilizes Neo-Confucianism as a tradition grounded in relationality, and draws upon Wang Yang-ming's description of the universal empathy whereby we may "form one body" with all things:

> Everything from ruler, minister, husband, wife, and friends to mountains, rivers, spiritual beings, birds, animals, and plants should be truly loved in order to realize my humanity that forms one body with them, and then my clear character will be completely manifested, and I will really form one body with Heaven, Earth, and the myriad things.[67]

Leder invokes against the Cartesian mechanistic model of the body the Neo-Confucian principle of relationality in recommending three ways whereby we may "form one body": morally, by *compassion*, aesthetically, by *absorption* or aesthetic openness to the world, and spiritually, by *communion*, experiencing "interconnection with the ground of all being."[68]

Descartes' medical philosophy is mechanistic, yet at the same time organic, in other words, relational. The human body as the subject of medical science was conceived by Descartes in terms of a machine, governed by the principles of physics and subject to physical manipulations to restore it to proper functioning. However, Descartes has an organic view of the inter-relation of the organs and systems of the individual body, and the inter-relation of persons who together constitute the body of society. Health in Descartes'

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[67] Wang Yang-ming, *Instructions for Practical Living and other Neo-Confucian Writings*, trans. and ed. Wing-tsit Chan (NY: Columbia University Press, 1963) 273; cited in Leder, *The Absent Body*, 164.

[68] Leder, *The Absent Body*, 161-73.

view depends on the concern of the mind to conserve the union of body and soul. According to Cartesian physics, the world was created by God and it continues to exist because God continually "conserves" it.[69] The human body is fit to receive a soul by virtue of the interconnection of its organ systems; the conservation of the union of soul and body is afforded by the mind's concern for the preservation of life, and by supportive factors in the environment.[70] Along similar lines, Descartes holds that political association is an instrument of the conservation of its human constituents; its institutions can be regarded as organs of the body politic, and the body politic serves in turn to preserve the soul-body unions of the persons who constitute it.[71] Besides relationality's inclusion of ethical relations among persons, a vast topic that I shall not discuss here, relationality characterizes cosmologies envisaging an interconnected web of life.

Āyurveda can greatly illuminate the idea of relationality as a determinant of health. Gerald Larson identifies several possibilities for expanding our concepts of the self and the human species, and our valuation of the ecology of the living world. In suggesting new agendas for healing based on Āyurvedic

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[69] René Descartes, *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, trans. John Cottingham, Robert Stoothoff, and Dugald Murdoch, 2 vols. (London and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984, 1985): *Meditations on First Philosophy*, 2:33.

[70] Richard B. Carter, *Descartes' Medical Philosophy* (Baltimore, MD and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983) 235.

[71] Carter, *Descartes' Medical Philosophy*, 236.

and South Asian cultural axioms, Larson employs the logical concept of *abhava*, "analytic absence" to point out absences suggesting the following perspectives on person, species, and life:

Axiom 1 **Absence of separation between birth and rebirth**:

The person is a product not just of parents, and of action in the present life, but of karmic heritage stemming from former lives, perhaps expressible in modern terms of evolutionary trajectory.

In terms of relationality, an "individual" exists in relation to past and future instantiations of her/himself (!).

Axiom 2 **Absence of separation between self and self, or self and other**:

Hindu concepts including *adhibhautika* or sociality could, Larson contends, inform a socio-biological notion of "species-health."

Relationality functions in the capacity of pointing out transactional and "dividual" influences on human health.

Axiom 3 **Absence of separation between divine and human, or between one species and another**:

The idea of rebirth in another life-form could ground "an ecological reverence for life that encompasses more than the human."[72]

Applications of relationality within ecologically grounded conceptions of life and health are precisely what is needed in our present world, to address the compromised and threatened well-being of eco-systems and their inhabitants.

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[72] Gerald James Larson, "Life Science (*ayurveda*) Old and New: In Search of New Agendas for Healing," paper presented at University of Hawai'i Center for South Asian Studies, 10th Spring Symposium: *Health and Healing in Medical Systems of South Asia* (Honolulu, April 12, 1993).

Relationality is a motif for contemporary ecological theory and philosophy of health. In ancient times, Āyurveda used ideas of relationality in an ecologically-informed approach to medicine. Ecology conceived the land and the human body as the two kinds of place, and was integral to the practice of a pathology based not on scientific physiology (which two thousand years ago had not yet evolved in India or Greece), but on *prognosis*, the interpretation of symptoms and stages of an illness. Zimmermann writes that the physician proceeded by "taking into consideration the most general conditions of life: climate, seasons, customs, postures. Ecology was an integral part of this practical context."[73]

The volume of the Caraka-saṃhita dealing with the body is the fourth volume, *Śarīra-sthana* (*śarīra*: body). It has chapters on mind and soul, embryology, anatomy, obstetrics and pediatrics. In its 5th chapter, *Puruṣavicaya Śarīra*, "Individual and Universe," is this verse which expresses the cosmological and pragmatic significance of relationality:

> If one realizes himself as spread in the entire universe and the entire universe spread in himself, he is indeed in possession of transcendental and worldly vision. His serenity of mind based on wisdom never fades away.
> 4:5.20 (II:423)

[73] Zimmermann, *The Jungle and the Aroma of Meats*, 20.

Creativity

In Chopra's articulation of Āyurveda, life itself is creativity, and healing is a creative act. The body, its systems, and its very cells have creative intelligence. At a quantum level, we are continually creating ourselves, physically and with our intelligence.[74] To illustrate the operation of creativity in human physiology, Chopra cites Claude Bernard, who described how the laws of physics and biochemistry "subordinate themselves and succeed one another in a pattern, and according to a law which pre-exists; they repeat themselves with order, regularity, constancy, and they harmonize in such a manner as to bring about the organization and growth of the individual."[75]

Chopra conceives disease as diversion from the flow of intelligence,[76] and he sees creative intelligence as a key to health, i.e., to creating conditions for new and more successful patterns in the functioning of the body/mind. In his recent work on aging and longevity, Chopra connects creativity with the universal force of creation. Noting the three forces that pervade life --creation, maintenance, and destruction-- Chopra writes:

> The genes of every species include the code for creating new cells, maintaining each cell for a certain time, and destroying it to make way for another generation of tissue. This three-in-one intelligence is what you are trying to affect when you consciously shape your life; it is up

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[74] Chopra, *Perfect Health*, 309-310.

[75] Claude Bernard, cited in Chopra, *Creating Health* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987, 1990) 181.

[76] Chopra, *Creating Health*, 83.

> to you which aspect --creation, maintenance, or destruction-- is most dominant... As long as creation dominates your existence, you will keep growing and evolving."

As regards creativity conceived in the usual sense of realizing and expressing new meanings, Chopra recommends creative activity for elders who wish to maximize their vitality, to create themselves as persons manifesting as much as possible their true human nature in intelligence and bliss.

If health is conceived as inclusive of the exercise of one's capacities, then health encompasses creativity. Human beings in general have a high degree of intelligence and a vast range of potential, so a healthy person uses these powers in some creative way suited to her nature. The manifestation of creativity can mark a psychophysical state where requirements for basic functioning are met, and a surplus of energy permits the bringing forth of new connections of meaning, whether in thought, language, music, the plastic arts, leadership, or other ways.

Among the ambiguities of human life revealed by consideration of health and illness is the fact, pointed out by Nietzsche, that pain and suffering can be stimulants to creativity. Walter Kaufmann says of Nietzsche's dialectical conception of health:

> It would be absurd to say that the work of healthy artists is *eo ipso* beautiful, while that of the ill must be ugly... Homer was blind and Beethoven deaf. Even Shakespeare and Goethe --Nietzsche thinks-- must have experienced a profound defect: artistic creation

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[77] Deepak Chopra, *Ageless Body, Timeless Mind* (NY: Harmony Books, 1993) 318.

> is prompted by something which the artist lacks, by suffering rather than undisturbed good health, by "sicknesses as great stimulants to life" (*The Will to Power*, 1003).[78]

In contrast to Nietzsche's view, Deutsch describes creativity in terms of the imparting of vitality:

> The creative act is a kind of "letting be," but at the same time it is a shaping, a formative act, that involves expressive power. Together with immanent purposiveness and cooperative control, the creative act is an infusion of power, an imparting of a felt life or vitality; it is a making of that which is alive with the very nature of natural-spiritual life.[79]

Deutsch's idea of *creative being* pertains to creative transformation of the constraints and conditions of one's being in the articulation and achievement of personhood.[80] Personal identity and freedom, he claims, are contingent upon creative being. Identity and freedom are determinants of creative being, and as I shall argue, they are determinants of health, in both medical and religious terms.

Generativity

In biological terms, a determinant of health is the ability to live to reproduce oneself. The *Caraka-saṃhita* addresses reproductive generativity in four quarter-chapters of the *Cikitsa-sthana*. A person without children is

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[78] Walter Kaufmann, *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1950, 1968) 130.

[79] Deutsch, *Creative Being*, 155.

[80] Deutsch, *Creative Being*, 32.

compared to "a lamp in sketches (not the actual lamp which emanates light)," but a person with many children is said to have "many faces, many dimensions, and multi-dimensional knowledge" [CS 6:2, quarter-chapter #1.16-24 (III.75-76)]. Generativity is presented here under the head of social and cultural determinants of health rather than biological, because human beings have capacities of spirituality, intellect and creativity extending beyond our mere biological natures.

To generate is to bring into being, but there are ways other than biological reproduction whereby persons may express generativity. This idea is as ancient as Plato's *Symposium*, wherein Diotima instructs Socrates that some persons' procreancy is of the body, while others' is of the soul. These persons "conceive and bear things of the spirit."

> And what are they? you ask. Wisdom and her sister virtues; it is the office of every poet to beget them, and of every artist whom we may call creative. Now, by far the most important kind of wisdom, she went on, is that which governs the ordering of society, and which goes by the names of justice and moderation.[81]

The developmental theory of Erik Erikson provides a modern psychological articulation of generativity, which Erikson says "encompasses the evolutionary development which has man the teaching and instituting as well as the learning animal."

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[81] Plato, *Symposium*, 208e-209b. In *Collected Dialogues of Plato*, ed. Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961).

> Mature man needs to be needed, and maturity needs guidance as well as encouragement from what has been produced and must be taken care of. Generativity, then, is primarily the concern in establishing and guiding the next generation, although there are individuals who through misfortune or because of special and genuine gifts in other directions, do not apply this drive to their own offspring. And indeed, the concept generativity is meant to include such more popular synonyms as *productivity* and *creativity*, which, however, cannot replace it.[82]

Generativity manifests an individual's vitality by exercising his or her inner resources and initiative to take responsibility for the perpetuation of human culture. Whether or not a person has biological offspring, generativity represents one's participation in the parenting of new generations. In the present state of the planet, over-population is at the root of many of our ills, environmental and human. Thus generativity has an amplified significance as an option for augmenting or transforming the impulse toward biological parenthood in ways that contribute to the well-being of the next generation, without necessarily adding to its numbers.

Enjoyment

The *Caraka-saṃhita's* recapitulation of the nature of the happy life promoted by Āyurveda lists a number of forms of enjoyment, including strength, knowledge, use of sensory capacities and objects of enjoyment, freedom to achieve, and freedom to move as one likes. The first-listed element

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[82] Erik H. Erikson, *Childhood and Society* (NY: W.W Norton, 1950, 1963) 266-67.

of a happy life is freedom from physical and mental ailments [CS 1:30.24 (1:599-600)]. An account of health would lack an essential ingredient of well-being without the factor of enjoyment. Maslow and Mittelmann note that an aspect of a healthy personality is "interest in several activities" and they list among their criteria for psychological health "the ability to derive pleasure from the physical things in life, such as eating and sleeping."[83]

The idea of enjoyment is applicable in contexts beyond basic physical and psychological ones. Domains of healthful enjoyment include e.g., sport and other forms of recreation, appreciation of the beauty of the natural world, the arts, crafting, friendship and social life, love and sensuality. Enjoyment can characterize the experiencing of meaning and well-being derived from one's work, one's contributions to family and society, and one's spiritual practice. To take the perspective of the *Bhagavadgīta's* karma-yoga, "enjoyment" in these aspects of life is not a matter of pleasure, but more a sense of satisfaction from carrying out one's responsibilities.

Metaphysical and Religious Determinants of Health

Self-Identity

Self-identity as a determinant of health does not have the technical philosophical meaning of an object's sameness over time, but signifies the

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[83] Maslow and Mittelmann, The Meaning of 'Healthy,'" in *Concepts of Health*, 49.

existential problem of knowing one's true nature, and manifesting it in one's being. In the context of health, self-identity encompasses questions about the extent to which a person's health-circumstances permit the seeking and actualizing of self-nature. In Tillich's analysis of the meaning of health, self-identity is integral to the dialectic process of life in physical, psychological and other dimensions:

> A centered and balanced living whole goes beyond itself, separates itself partly from its unity, but in so doing it tries to preserve its identity and to return in its separated parts to itself.[84]

The dangers of this dialectical process are, on the one hand, extending oneself in such a way that self-identity is reduced or destroyed, and on the other hand, experiencing various degrees of inability to extend and alter oneself. Thus tension exists in facing possible threats to self-identity (and to one's health, physical and/or psychological) in the course of seeking to realize one's identity.

Nietzsche's point that what is healthy depends on a particular person's nature[85] is echoed in Ingmar Pörn's "Equilibrium Model of Health," which presupposes self-identity as a determinant of health. By "equilibrium" Pörn means the balance of an individual's capacities and goals. To determine the criteria for a person's health, Pörn says, requires choosing among interpretations of "functioning well," for instance, functioning as one's cohorts do, to meet

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[84] Tillich, "The Meaning of Health," 4.

[85] Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 177.

one's basic needs, or to satisfy one's aspirations. Pörn selects the third interpretation, and defines health as follows:

> Health is the state of a person which obtains when his repetoire [of abilities] is adequate relative to his profile of goals. A person who is healthy in this sense carries with him the intrapersonal resources that are sufficient for what his goals require of *him*.[86]

Health, in Pörns's view, depends on the mutual fitness of a person's profile of goals and his repetoire of abilities. Illness then, is the state where the repetoire is inadequate to the person's goal profile. Impairments, injuries and diseases are characterized in Pörns's model as *states*, *changes*, and *processes* respectively, which are abnormal due to their tendencies to restrict repetoires of desired action. On this basis, one is ill only if one's repetoire is restricted relative to one's own goals. Pörn sees health in relation to a person's ability to do the things that the person holds as goals. If goals are taken to represent steps in the evolution of a person's nature, then working toward goals is a means of articulating one's self-identity. To be healthy is to live and to act in accord with the truth of one's self-nature.

Identity is the link between medical and religious therapeutics as analyzed by Halbfass. Commenting on Caraka's verse on the fourfold medical knowledge, *cause*, *diagnosis*, *cure*, and *prevention* of disease [CS 1:9.19 (I:189)], Halbfass says that the verse

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[86] Ingmar Pörn, "An Equilibrium Model of Health," in *Health, Disease, and Causal Explanation in Medicine*, ed. L. Nordenfelt and B.I.B. Lindahl (Dordrecht and Boston: D. Reidel Publishing Co., 1984) 5.

> ...does not mention "health" as such; instead it refers to the "nonrecurrence of diseases" (*roganam apunarbhavah*). While this is a negative manner of expression and presentation, it also contains a remarkable absolutist claim. It is obviously reminiscent of the claims and ideas of the philosophers, who try to achieve final liberation from all cyclical occurences, from rebirth and repeated existence (*punarjanma*, *punarbhava*), from *samsara* in general."[87]

Exploring the relation of liberation and identity in Advaita Vedanta, Halbfass quotes Śaṅkara's commentator Sureśvara:

> From medical treatment, the natural state (*svasthya*) results for one who is afflicted by disease; likewise isolation (*kaivalya*, i.e., final liberation) results once the misconception of the self has been destroyed through knowledge.[88]

Deutsch writes that the possibility of freedom is limited to the extent that self-deception interferes with one's achievement of identity as an integrated person. Self-deception "touches almost everyone in fundamental ways and makes for the spiritual atrophy that so often resides in our being."[89] Realization of identity is a corollary of freedom in the contexts of medical and religious well-being, and to a great extent, identity and freedom embody the meaning of health, psychophysical and spiritual.

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[87] Wilhelm Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection, Explorations in Indian Thought* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991) 249.

[88] Sureśvara's *Sambandhavartikka* (the introduction to his commentary on Śaṅkara's *Brhadaranyakopanisad-bhasya*) verse 28; cited in Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection*, 251.

[89] Deutsch, *Creative Being*, 40, 34.

Freedom

Freedom in the domain of physical health refers to freedom from impairments resulting from illness or injury, freedom from accompanying pain and suffering, and freedom from susceptibility. Engelhardt identifies freedom as the essence of health, and concludes that treating medical problems is a matter of granting freedom:

> If health is a state of freedom from the compulsion of psychological and physiological forces, there is a common leitmotif in the treatment of either schizophrenia or congestive heart failure-- namely the focus on securing the autonomy of the individual from a particular class of restrictions.[90]

Freedom is a determinant of health because it is a condition for a person to act for survival and for the achievement of goals. Psychological freedom concerns a person's inner powers, and the constraints emergent from one's personality and circumstances. Aspects of the personality unaccepted by oneself and submerged in the unconscious can restrict freedom by interfering with creativity, intimacy and other articulations of personhood. Non-integrated forces may demand a channeling of effort toward repressing and/or maladaptively engaging these aspects of personality in outer experience. Freedom in the context of psychological health is exemplified by Jung's conception of seeking greater wholeness through bringing to the light of consciousness, and integrating into one's awareness, restricted amd restricting forces of the unconscious.

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[90] Engelhardt, "The Concepts of Health and Disease" in *Concepts of Health and Disease*, 42.

Freedom is an integral concern in embodied human life and for medicine and the healing arts. Āyurveda is concerned with perpetuating freedom --medical, but also spiritual. Cromwell Crawford identifies the following three themes in his analysis of medical and religious elements of Hindu medicine:

> 1) Spirituality represents a dimension of health (as do the body and the mind;
>
> 2) spirituality... is not isolated from the mind-body complex, but embraces and empowers every cell and fiber of the organism;
>
> 3) the relationship of spirituality to health is reciprocal-- health promotes spirituality and spirituality promotes health.[91]

Concern for freedom is at the heart of Hinduism-- freedom from suffering, and from all that interferes with realizing one's true nature. Āyurveda's province is the art and science of medicine; its first priority is not religious liberation, but the immediate issues of the health and sickness of the body and body/mind. Though Āyurveda is not primarily a *mokṣa-śastra* or science of liberation, liberation is among the Hindu aims of life that Āyurveda seeks to serve, along with material well-being, enjoyment, and righteousness. Āyurveda promotes freedom in embodied life: freedom from physical and psychological afflictions, and freedom to pursue one's aims.

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[91] Cromwell Crawford, "Āyurveda: The Science of Long Life in Contemporary Perspective," in *Eastern and Western Approaches to Healing*, ed. Anees A. Sheikh and Katharina S. Sheikh (NY: John Wiley and Sons, 1989) 30.

ĀYURVEDA, MEDICINE AND RELIGIOUS THERAPEUTICS

There are some fascinating controversies surrounding the religious and scientific origins and development of Āyurveda. In the words of Kenneth Zysk, Debiprasad Chattopadyaya rightly argues that:

> ...Indian medical epistemology is fundamentally opposed to brahmaṇic ideology, and that the classical medical treatises of Caraka and Suśruta result from a grafting process whereby orthodox brahmaṇic ideals were superimposed onto a medical framework.[92]

Zysk argues that Hindu medicine developed largely by the efforts of heterodox ascetics rather than brahmaṇic intellectuals, and that Buddhist monastic establishments were highly instrumental in the refinement and systematization of ancient Indian medicine. Rather than pursuing this line of inquiry, I accept that Āyurvedic therapeutics meet, in several ways, my initial criteria for religious therapeutics. The term *religious therapeutics* denotes:

1. Religious meanings that have applications in health and healing;
2. Religious means of healing;
3. Health as a support of religious life;
4. Religion as offering an ultimate remedy for the suffering of the human condition.

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[92] Kenneth Zysk, *Asceticism and Healing in Ancient India* (NY and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991) 6-7. See Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya, *Science and Society in Ancient India* (Calcutta: Research India Publications, 1977).

Medical theory presupposes concepts of human nature, cosmology, and so on, which in many systems of health/medicine are grounded in matrices of religious meaning. Examples of religious means of healing are prayer, faith, ceremony, and annointing of the sick with consecrated oil, practiced for example by Mormons.[93] Regarding health as a support for religious life, the system of classical Yoga is paradigmatic. In Yoga and elsewhere in Indian and world traditions there are instances of how religiousness itself offers a higher kind of healing from the suffering of human life.

Āyurveda incorporates religious means of curing, such as the use of *mantra* for healing. Āyurveda further qualifies as a system of religious therapeutics on the basis that a religious context, Hinduism, informs its medical theory and practice. Regardless of the exact relation of Āyurveda's religious and scientific elements, the healthful life that Āyurveda promotes contributes to religious life. Further, living according to Āyurvedic principles can mean living religiously in the sense of achieving a proper relation with what is sacred, and in making *more* of oneself in connection with that sacred force. For Āyurveda, life itself is sacred.

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[93] Lester E. Bush, Jr. "The Mormon Tradition," in *Caring and Curing, Health and Medicine in the Western Religious Traditions*, ed. Ronald L. Numbers and Darrel W. Amundsen (NY: Macmillan, 1986) 403.

Self Health-Care

Āyurveda recommends a life that is wholesome, and thus holy, in respect of living according to a pattern of daily and seasonal routines, hygiene, diet, and activities appropriate to our individual constitution, and nourishing to our vital energies. At the foundation of such a life is the Hindu principle of self-knowledge. Āyurveda prescribes self-knowledge at an empirical level. For example, as a person whose predominant *doṣa*-type is *pitta*, the principle associated with fire, I know that I benefit from extra effort to stay cool in the hot season. This is a simple example of Āyurvedic health maintenance, but underlying it is the foundation of self-knowledge: in this case, knowledge of the principles that govern nature, and of one's own empirical nature and requirements for optimum well-being. More than this, self-knowledge in Āyurveda functions within a context of religious meaning: the self one cares for has a spiritual element supported by the physical body.

Āyurveda asks that we adopt ways of living that support our vitality rather than compromising it. One means of doing so is to regulate one's life in accordance with the qualities of the seasons and times of day. Time is a significant factor in Āyurveda's conception of the causes of disease and health:

> The causes of disease relating to both mind and body are three-fold: wrong utilization, non-utilization and excessive utilization of time, mental faculties, and objects of the sense organs.
>
> The body and mind constitute the substrata of diseases and happiness (i.e., positive health). Balanced utilization (of time, mental faculties and objects of sense organs) is the cause of happiness.
> CS 1:54-55 (I:39-40)

In Āyurvedic self-health-care, the factor of time especially concerns attunement with qualities of energy that prevail in particular cycles of the day and year. Information about daily and seasonal regimens is available in the *Caraka-saṃhita*,[94] and other sources, but there are good contemporary works on Āyurvedic health maintenance that make Āyurvedic principles more accessible. For an example of the Āyurvedic approach to living in accord with daily time-cycles, and in order to appreciate Āyurvedic principles more concretely, consider some of Chopra's recommendations for daily routine.

Appreciation of Ayurveda's prescription for daily routine requires reference to the three *doṣas* or vital principles, *vata*, *pitta*, and *kapha*, whose basic natures are motion, metabolism, and stability, respectively. These *doṣas* govern a three-phase cycle between sunrise to sunset, and repeated between sunset and sunrise. The times listed vary with season and location.

Day	*Night*
6am-10am - *Kapha*	6pm-10pm - *Kapha*
10am-2pm - *Pitta*	10pm-2am - *Pitta*
2pm-6pm - *Vata*	2am -6am - *Vata*

Figure 2: ***The 6 phases of the day according to Maharishi Āyurveda***[95]

[94] See for example *Caraka-saṃhita*, Vol. 1 *(Sutra-sthana)*, chapters 5-7.

[95] Chopra, *Perfect Health*, 199-211.

By waking before sunrise, "you take advantage of Vata's qualities of lightness, exhilaration, and freshness. These are infused into your body just before sunrise and last throughout the day."[96] For evidence of this, compare the sense of slowness and heaviness --*kapha* qualities-- that can result from waking later in the morning. The main meal of the day is best taken at mid-day, when the digestive fire, along with the sun, burns brightest, under the domination of the firey *doṣa*, *pitta*, which governs metabolism and distribution of energy. The afternoon *vata* period can be a time of mental fluidity and efficiency. In the evening one should not fight *kapha's* tendency toward a slow and relaxed pace, and one should go to sleep early, before the resurgence of *pitta* brings about the inclination to wakefulness and activity.

There is another way that time is important to health, not in terms of scheduling daily and seasonal activities, but as regards living within measured time and being either relaxed or suffering from "time-pressure." Stress-disorders are increasingly recognized in western medical philosophy. Along with psychological tensions, and physical irritants such as chemical toxins and noise pollution, a sense of time-pressure can aggravate and even produce medical problems. In the contemporary world, many persons struggle painfully with accomplishing all that they take on, within amounts of time that are barely sufficient. Very little unscheduled time is available in modern persons' schedules for rest, recreation, social life, creative work and worship.

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[96] Chopra, *Perfect Health*, 201.

An Āyurvedic approach to life brings us to question the extent to which we sacrifice our health for the sake of our goals and desires, some of which are necessary and worthwhile, and others that can perhaps be relinquished or recast. Āyurvedic living nurtures sensitivity to one's individual requirements for maximal well-being, and can cultivate degrees of energy and vitality beyond what we might have thought possible. This vitality can be used to accomplish goals, but one must put one's health first in order to cultivate it.

A suggestion for health care reform, made by anthropologist and M.D. Melvin Konner, is greater realism (on the part of both patients and providers), about the efficacy of technological solutions for medical problems. He suggests that the public's expectation that high-tech solutions will rescue them from health-problems contributes to individuals' irresponsibility for maintaining their own health.[97] Āyurveda is this connection emphasizes prevention, and the individual's reponsibility and also *power* to cultivate her or his own health. A person living according to Āyurvedic principles of diet, daily and seasonal routine, and mental attitude is probably less likely to develop e.g., heart disease. Moreover, Āyurveda fosters acute sensitivity to one's health-states, so that symptoms of incipient illness can be addressed in their early stages.

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[97] David L. Wheeler, "Physician-Anthropologist Examines What Ails America's Medical System," *Chronicle of Higher Education* (June 2, 1993) 39 (39), A6-7. Konner's book is *Medicine at the Crossroads: The Crisis in Health Care* (Pantheon).

Āyurveda and Contemporary Medicine

Investigators at Harvard Medical School estimate that in 1990, U.S. citizens made 425 million visits to providers of "unconventional therapy" (including e.g., chiropractic, therapeutic massage, dietetics, spiritual healing), compared to 388 million visits to primary care physicians. The amount spent on "alternative medicine" was estimated at $13.7 billion, versus $12.8 billion paid out-of-pocket for hospital care.[98] Patients' interest in alternative health care reflects concerns about communication between patient and practitioner, high costs of regular medical care, and sometimes the failure of conventional medicine to resolve particular conditions. Interest in alternative medicine also reflects a current intellectual and cultural inclination toward holistic paradigms; many individuals are interested in therapeutic strategies that accord with and support holistic perspectives on human life and health.

There is a gap between the development of sophisticated medical technologies and the successful delivery of health care, especially among populations short on economic resources. Throughout the world, indigenous healing systems flourish both in cooperation and conflict with modern medicine, and many persons rely on traditional health practitioners and methods. Traditional systems of healing can augment the delivery of health-care,

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[98] David M. Eisenberg, M.D. et al. "Unconventional Medicine in the United States," *New England Journal of Medicine* 328 (Jan. 28, 1993) 246-52.

and as Gerald Larson suggests, they can contribute to health-care reform by providing additional ways of understanding health and illness.[99]

Konner criticizes the trend toward medical specialization and away from primary care physicians who can know patients well over time, communicate with them and help them stay well. Āyurveda's holism entails a physician's gaining a detailed picture of the patient's psychophysical and environmental circumstances as part of a thorough diagnosis and treatment plan. In the present time of health-care reform in the the U.S., an important point to draw from Āyurveda is that primary providers of health-care in many repsects can serve patients better within an on-going and communicative relationship. "Health-management organizations," intended to make health care more accessible, have the disadvantage that patients may be less likely to work with the same physician over time. Some compensation for this drawback is available through practitioners applying effort to seeking a more comprehensive understanding of their patients as persons, and of the many factors affecting their patients' medical conditions. Another approach is more effective utilization of nurses, physician's assistants, and other health-care practitioners in health-education and preventative health-care.

A survey of M.D.'s in Los Angeles and other U.S. cities revealed that many doctors utilize or recommend to their patients various alternative healing

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[99] Larson, "Āyurveda and the Hindu Philosophical Systems," in *Self as Body*, 103.

approaches. Some M.D.'s have completed full programs of study in systems such as Āyurveda or Chinese medicine and acupuncture, and combine western and Asian medicine in their practice. Others physicians incorporate, depending on the circumstances, measures such as praying with a patient.[100] In addition to its conceptual contributions, Āyurveda is an outstanding resource to supplement contemporary health-care, because patients can develop their own knowledge and power to apply its preventative methods, and to cultivate positive health. Physicians can make use of Āyurvedic principles, free of incompatibility with scientific medicine, and without the extensive training required, for example, to practice acupuncture.

Reforms in medical education show an inclination toward holistic perspectives that could be informed by Āyurvedic medical philosophy. The Problem-Based Learning Program was pioneered at McMaster University in 1969, and versions of it have been implemented at a small number of other U.S. medical schools, including Harvard and the University of Hawai'i. Rather than emphasizing the acquisition of vast amounts of medical information, as has been characteristic of medical school curricula, the program emphasizes the physician's locating and applying knowledge in specific medical cases. A more holistic view of the person is implicit in the consideration of patients in biological, behavioral, and social contexts. There is also a broader view of the

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[100] Oscar Janiger, M.D., and Philip Goldberg, "Daring to Be Different," *Hippocrates* 7 (6) (June 1993) 42-48. Excerpted from their book, *A Different Kind of Healing*, Putnam, 1993.

physician-as-person: medical education in these programs develops physicians as practitioners who deal not only with patients, but with colleagues, families of patients, with the community, and with themselves as individuals and moral-agents.[101] The web of domains embraced by Āyurveda ranges from the most minute bio-chemical habitus of a patient's particular affected tissue, to the domain of the social environment, and a cosmological level that is both natural and sacred. An emerging ecological conception of medicine entails cooperation of biochemical knowledge of health and disease, with understanding of physical, psychological, environmental, social and other factors affecting health. A small dose of Āyurvedic medical theory could provide some helpful insights for physicians-in-training.

Human suffering can be greatly alleviated, and human potential more greatly realized, by better thinking and action in the domain of health. From the standpoint of philosophy's making concrete contributions to human life, health is one of the most fruitful areas where we can exercise our thought. Philosophy receives something back for this effort: health --and related themes such as body and religiousness-- provides a window on questions as fundamental as what it means to be a human being, and how one should live.

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[101] Alexander Anderson, M.D. Professor of Medicine and Director, Problem-Based Learning Curriculum, John A. Burns School of Medicine, University of Hawai'i. Interview with author. Honolulu, HI, April 29, 1993; John A. Burns School of Medicine, *General Guide to the M.D. Program*, and Unit *I Handbook: Health and Illness*, 1992-93.

An Āyurvedic understanding of "medicine" incorporates not just pharmacology, surgery, and the other empirical disciplines we associate with the word. The close relation of medicine and religion is reflected in the etymological fact that the Indo-European root √*med*, "to take appropriate measures," is the source of both "medicine," and "meditation." Among *med's* descendents are the Latin *mederī*, 'to look after', 'to heal'; and *meditarī*, 'to think about', 'to reflect'. Āyurveda's fourfold therapeutic paradigm is given in *Caraka-saṃhita* 1:9.19 (I:189):

-Cause of disease
-Diagnosis
-Cure
-Prevention

The following chapter, "Classical Yoga as a Religious Therapeutic," reconstructs Yoga's therapeutic paradigm, and draws on determinants of health gleaned from Āyurveda and other sources, to exhibit relations between health and religiousness in Yoga.

Part II

YOGIC AND OTHER RELIGIOUS THERAPEUTICS

Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and all that is within me,
bless his holy name.

Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and forget not all his benefits:

Who forgiveth all thine iniquities.
who healeth all thy diseases;

Who redeemeth thy life from destruction;
who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies;

Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things;
so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.

Psalms 103:1-5

Chapter 3

CLASSICAL YOGA AS A RELIGIOUS THERAPEUTIC

The idea of *religious therapeutics* pertains to a range of themes concerning health and spiritual life. Analysis of the tradition of classical or Patañjala Yoga reveals two primary dimensions of religious therapeutics: 1) Health as part of religious life, for example, methods of purifying and strengthening the body in order to support greater spiritual awareness and progress, and 2) Liberation as healing: attainment of freedom from all limitations and all suffering. Classical Yoga is a system of psychophysical healing and religious liberation that is remarkable among world traditions for its comprehensiveness. Yoga's metaphysics accounts for the human being's body-mind and spirit so as to guide practitioners in ethics, health, and progress toward enlightened consciousness. As a religious path, Yoga offers a means for attaining the ultimate soteriological aim: *moksa* or freedom from *saṃsara*, the cycle of re-birth and suffering.

The Yoga teachings are available in broad-ranging texts and detailed commentaries in the original Sanskrit and in translation, so persons from ancient times and into the future have access to elucidation of Yoga's principles, procedures, and potential. Consonant with the Indian tradition's emphasis on

spiritual instruction by a *guru*, a teacher who is a master of a given tradition, direct guidance in the practice of Yoga is available through the efforts of many teachers in India and throughout the world. The two primary methods for Yoga-study are study of Yoga texts (and ultimately the principles they endeavor to communicate), and practice of the limbs of Yoga. Knowledge and practice go hand-in-hand in Yoga: the earliest of the *Yoga-sutras*' commentaries, Vyasa's *Yoga-bhaṣya* (4th century c.e.), says that practice of the limbs of Yoga destroys unreal cognition, and leads to descriminative knowledge (YBh 1.28). Higher knowledge or wisdom is essential for liberation, and cultivation of knowledge -- by means of self-education such as study of scriptures-- is among Yoga's many accessories to attainment of liberative higher knowledge. The present chapter brings out connections between health and religiousness in the theory and practice of classical Yoga. The system of Yoga is analyzed to establish a matrix of religious therapeutics, and it is argued that liberation in Yoga is healing in an ultimate sense.

THE IDEA OF RELIGIOUS THERAPEUTICS

Philosophical Therapeutics

In the West, Plato initiated the theme of philosophical therapeutics --reason and reflection as a remedy for the human condition-- with his exhortation that the cave of ignorance be escaped by means of the philosophical

enterprise.[1] That health is integral to the good life is clear from his analogy that health is to the body as justice is to the soul. Socrates presents the centrality of justice by placing it parallel with health, an undisputed desideratum. The concept of health is employed by Socrates to indicate the nature of the good: "Virtue," he says, is "a kind of health and beauty and good condition of the soul."[2]

Several strains of philosophical therapeutics exist in western philosophy. A notable instance is the Hellenistic prescription of *ataraxia* or tranquility: "...peaceful living according to the institutions of one's own country and the dictates of one's own feelings, experience, and common sense."[3] The Hellenistic tradition of Scepticism (4th C. b.c.e.-3rd century c.e.) has been misunderstood to advocate hyperbolic doubt of one's experiences and feelings, resulting in a philosophically induced state of anesthesia. In fact, Scepticism aimed not for numbness, but for *eudaimonia*: happiness attained by practical wisdom for the proper conduct of life.[4]

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[1] Plato, *Republic*, Bk. 7:514-20. In *Collected Dialogues of Plato*, ed. Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961).

[2] Plato, *Republic*, Bk. 4:444.

[3] Philip P. Hallie, *Scepticism, Man, and God: Selections from the Major Writings of Sextus Empiricus* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1964) 7.

[4] Hallie, *Scepticism*, 5-7.

The physician Sextus Empiricus was the main codifier of Scepticism, the predominant philosophical orientation of the medical researchers of the period.[5] Sextus Empiricus used medical metaphors in his writing, the main one being the aperient medicine or purgative. The Sceptical formulae, he writes:

> ...can be used to cancel themselves, since they are themselves included in those things to which they refer, just as purgative medicines not only remove the humours from the body but expel themselves together with the humours.[6]

Though Scepticism is associated with doubt, the Greek word *skeptikoi* means "inquirers" or "investigators."[7] Doubt, conceived as the suspension of judgment, is the method of Scepticism, whose ultimate purpose, Hallie says, "is to make doubting unnecessary,"[8] similar to the way aperient drugs eliminate themselves along with waste material from the body:

> It should be clear by now that Scepticism is a kind of therapy for curing rampant, fanantical dogmatism by allowing us to be indifferent to it in all its forms. And it does all this in much the same way and for the same purposes for which a physician administers an aperient: to eliminate the troublesome and to permit his patient to lead a normal, healthy, trouble-free life. Greek Scepticism is seen in the light of this metaphor as a therapeutic, happiness-enhancing philosophy, not as a paralysis-inducing drug or disease.[9]

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[5] Hallie, *Scepticism*, 10.

[6] Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines of Pyrhonnism*, 1.28, in Hallie, 86.

[7] Hallie, *Scepticism*, 10.

[8] Hallie, *Scepticism*, 7.

[9] Hallie, *Scepticism*, 86 n7.

In the early modern period, Spinoza's *Ethics* prescribes a therapeutic for the pain of bondage to emotions and for attaining the Good conceived as the intellectual love of God, by cultivating "adequate ideas" (ideas that are active, clear, and distinct), and successfully directing one's *conatus* (the drive for self-preservation).[10] A specific articulation of a philosophical therapeutic is Tschirnhaus' ***Medicinus Mentis***, "Mental Medicine." Seventeenth century German mathematician and physicist E.W. von Tschirnhaus --influenced by Cartesianism, Spinoza, Leibniz, and British Empiricism-- emphasized the therapeutic value of truth and reason as antidotes to the passions which produce error and hence unhappiness.[11]

In the 20th century, Wittgenstein argues for philosophical analysis as therapy. Like different medical therapies, there are different philosophical methods. He writes: "A main cause of philosophical disease--a one-sided diet: one nourishes one's thinking with only one kind of example.[12] Wittgenstein arrives, according to Hallie, at a position like that of the Sceptics; philosophy eliminates itself along with the problems it solves:

> The real discovery is the one that makes me capable of stopping doing philosophy when I want to.-- The one that gives philosophy

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[10] Baruch Spinoza, *The Ethics*, 1677 (*Ethics and Selected Letters*, Samuel Shirley trans. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1982).

[11] G. Tonelli, "Tschirnhaus," in *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 8 vols. ed. Paul Edwards (NY: Macmillan 1972) 8:163.

[12] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, G.E.M. Anscombe trans. (NY: Macmillan, 1968) #593.

> peace, so that it is no longer tormented by questions that bring itself into question.[13]

Wittgenstein asks that philosophy resolve problems so as to obviate the need for itself, but the greater part of the Western philosophical tradition accepts that philosophy is self-perpetuating, owing to the human inclination to wonder. A philosophical therapeutic aims to solve the problems of human life through reason and the proper conduct of life. A religious therapeutic on the other hand, seeks to resolve the ailments of the human condition in an ultimate way, that is, as regards the person's spiritual self, and its destiny. While a philosophical therapeutic may or may not have religious elements, a religious therapeutic assumes that the human being has a soteriological potential actualized in overcoming the maladies of life by achieving a proper relationship with that which is sacred.

Religion and Medicine, Soteriology and Healing

Religion and medicine are distinct fields of human endeavor, but the human need for well-being of body, mind and spirit marks the common ground of medical and religious effort. The idea of a religious therapeutic is supported by Tillich's position on the intimate relation of religion and healing. His view is based on the New Testament accounts of healing, which he says should not

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[13] Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, #133.

be taken as miracle stories, but as illustrations of Jesus' identity as the universal healer. Human beings in their finitude require "particular" healing, that is, healing of specific ailments through surgical, pharmaceutical, and psycho-therapeutic and other such means. But the human being in his ultimate nature stands in need of salvation in a total and ultimate sense. Jesus as a healer embodies the meaning of the saviour, the *sōter* (Gk.) or healer, the one who makes healthy and whole.[14] In classical Yoga, liberation as healing is the attainment of freedom from limitations and suffering by realization of one's true nature as pure consciousness.

The idea of religious therapeutics demands inquiry into the relations that obtain between soteriology (the theory of salvation), and health and healing. The common ground of salvation and healing is evident in etymological analysis. *Soteriology* --and *savior*-- are derived from the Greek verb *sōzein*, *'to save'*).[15] The Latin equivalent is *salvare*, the source of 'salvation'.[16] The Indo-European root √*sol-* (variant, √*sal-*) means 'whole'. Descendents of √*sol-* include the Latin *salus*, health or wholeness, and the English words *save*

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[14] Paul Tillich, "The Meaning of Health" in *Religion and Medicine*, ed. David Belgum (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1967) 11-12.

[15] *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd edition, 20 vols. Prepared by J.A. Simpson and E.S.C. Weiner (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989) 14:525-26, s.v. "save"; 16:36, "soteriology."

[16] *OED*, 14:420, s.v. "salvation."

and *salvation.*[17] *Salvare* 'to save', can denote religious salvation, and can also mean 'to make whole'.[18] 'To make whole' is the literal meaning of the Old English verbal root *hal*, origin of the modern English verb *heal.*[19] *Heal* carries the meaning of *restoration* from an undesirable condition, and at an elemental level pertains to saving, purifying, cleansing, and repairing to bring about restoration from evil, suffering, or unwholesomeness. These are also functions of religion. Reference to *healing* within the domains of human physicality and psychology is the most common use of the concept of healing, but it does not constitute its fundamental or only meaning.

The word *therapeutic* is from the Greek verb *therapúein*, and pertains to curing and restoring. The Greek term *therapeía*, healing, akin to *therápōn*, "attendant," can connote medical or religious endeavor, for it refers to the attending of a healer to a patient, and can also designate attending in the form of religious ministering.[20] The terms "cure" and "restore" reveal two perspectives on healing. *Curing* refers to the alleviation of impaired functioning and discomfort, while *restoring* connotes returning to an original state of well-being. These two meanings support a conception of healing as having religious as well as medical implications. The close relationship of healing and religion

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[17] *American Heritage Dictionary*, Appendix: "Indo-European Roots," (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1981) p. 1541, s.v. "sol-."

[18] *OED*, 14:525-26, s.v. "save."

[19] *OED*, 7:52, s.v. "heal."

[20] *OED*, 17:904-05, s.v. "therapeutic."

is well substantiated in the Indian tradition, where liberation is often construed as a return to the unimpaired state of one's true nature. This is reflected in the Sanskrit terms for health *svasthya* and *svasthata*: "self-abiding" or "coinciding with oneself" [*sva* 'oneself'; √*stha* 'to stand']. Halbfass notes in his analysis of the Indian traditions' therapeutic paradigms that in Advaita Vedanta, these two terms are used by Śaṅkara and his disciple Sureśvara "to refer to their soteriological goal, the unobstructed presence and identity of the *atman*."[21] The comparable term in Yoga is *svarupe 'vastanam*: establishment in one's own essential nature," which is Yoga's prime stated aim (YS 1.3).

Contemporary interest in religious therapeutics is evident in the expansion of research activity under the rubric of religion and medicine. For instance, in his article "Mantra in Āyurveda," Kenneth Zysk writes:

> At all times and in almost every culture, a connection between medicine and religion is demonstrable. The belief that by soliciting divine intervention through prayer and ritual no disease is incurable cuts across cultural boundaries.[22]

Zysk's emphasis here is medical applications of religious speech in Āyurveda, and while religious therapeutics may include religious means of treating health problems, religious therapeutics embrace many other relations between healing and religiousness. In Yoga, physical and psychological maladies may be

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[21] Wilhelm Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection: Explorations in Indian Thought* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991) 250.

[22] Kenneth Zysk, "Mantra in Āyurveda" in *Understanding Mantras*, ed. Harvey P. Alper (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1989) 134.

remedied by religious effort, but such healing is incidental or instrumental to a more fundamental healing: restoration to one's self-nature as consciousness, unencumbered by psychophysical limitations.

Religion and medicine serve the common purpose of helping persons with their troubles and transitions in the stages of living and dying, and they share the aim of remedying human suffering. In India, the relation that obtains between religion and medicine is importantly different from the dominant tradition in the West. From the time of Descartes, a dichotomy between science and religion has been maintained. Religion and medicine tend to be considered on opposite ends of the spectrum of cultural domains. Medicine is oriented toward the body and life in the present world, while religion is considered the province of the spirit. In the Indian tradition, there is a much greater affinity between medicine and religion, healing and liberation. One of the major commentaries on the *Yoga-sutras*, Vacaspati-miśra's *Tatta-vaiśaradī* states that the science of Yoga is similar to the science of medicine for both are "taught for the welfare of all" (TV 2.15). The contrast of Western and Indian perspectives on religion and medicine is rooted in their divergent metaphysical conceptions of person, body, and the human's soteriological prerogative. The Indian tradition has a more holistic view of the human being as a unity with psychophysical and spiritual dimensions. Each of the traditional four aims of life (*dharma*, righteousness; *artha*, material well-being including health; *kama*, enjoyment, and *mokṣa*, liberation) serves earthly

well-being, but more than that, each aim contributes to attainment of the ultimate goal: self-realization and spiritual liberation.

Western and Indian approaches to health and spirituality diverge epistemically as well. While the Indian tradition in general is more oriented toward the sacred, science and reason are strongly valued in the West. Medicine in the western world relies heavily on empirical science, but in Hinduism, religious knowledge and to a large extent, medical knowledge, are both rooted in vedic knowledge, considered to provide comprehension more complete and truthful than knowledge available empirically. Āyurveda, the medical tradition which is a companion discipline to Yoga, exemplifies co-operation of empirical and intuitive knowledge, and attention to both earthly and spiritual concerns.

From the standpoint of value theory, the Western presupposition that rationality is among the highest goods has been accompanied by the application of reason and knowledge for utilization of the earth's natural resources. Technologically developed material resources are central to diagnosis and treatment in contemporary scientific medicine, evident in the use of sophisticated diagnostic instruments, pharmacology, and surgery. Health in the Indian view, however, is conceived more broadly as well-being within the spiritual as well as the psychophysical domain. Healing involves transformations not only of matter, but of spirit, and incorporates self-knowledge and self-transformation guided by

essential elements of Indian value, such as cultivation of inherent intelligence and the uncovering of one's ultimate self-nature.

> ...yoga and other practices are helping to change our whole concept of health and restoring the broken link between medicine and spirituality. As the modern practitioner finds himself more and more helpless in the face of purely functional disorders, we seem to be on the eve of a medical revolution, which should restore the lost balance and do away, among other things, with excessive reliance on drugs.[23]

The Indian tradition, and Yoga in particular, substantiate in several ways the claim that the perpetuation of health and of spirituality have common sources and applications, thus grounding a theory of religious therapeutics. Classical Yoga is presented here as a religious therapeutic with these 5 areas:

Philosophical Foundations:
Yoga's therapeutic paradigm

Soteriology:
Self-realization by healing the afflictions (kleśas)

Value Theory:
Health and the good in Yoga

Physical Practice:
The soteriological role of body and health in Yoga

Cultivation of Consciousness:
The polarity of samadhi *and* vyadhi *(illness)*

Yoga is among humanity's greatest resources for informing theory and practice in the domain of health. Yet it is another relation between health and spirituality that grounds Yoga's higher dimension as a religious therapeutic:

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[23] Vamberto Morais, "The Contribution of Yoga to Modern Life" in *The Nature of Religious Man*, ed. D.B. Fry (London: Octogon, 1982) 129.

> Yoga physiology or psychology thus takes its direction and significance from the reality which is beyond the body or the psyche. This renders the physio-psychology of yoga sacred. The cultivation of the body or the mind for their own sake is not yoga. The psychic healing of yoga has its centre above the psyche; here the wholeness aspired for is that of holiness.[24]

Yoga upholds a standard of human well-being --psychophysical and spiritual-- that greatly expands our view of body, health and human potential. The wholeness which is holiness, the liberation which is healing in its fundamental meaning, is the object of Yogic religious therapeutics.[25]

A MATRIX OF CLASSICAL YOGA AS A RELIGIOUS THERAPEUTIC

Philosophical Foundations: *Yoga's Therapeutic Paradigm*

Yoga's philosophical foundations have a therapeutic orientation whose concern "is not only the diagnosis of the human condition but also the prescription and effecting of a cure that will make man whole."[26] Western philosophy's traditional branches --metaphysics, theory of knowledge, and value theory-- identify topics of religious concern, such as the natures of the person, world and Absolute, problems of religious knowledge, and principles of the

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[24] R. Ravindra, "Is Religion Psychotherapy?" *Religious Studies* 14 (Spring 1978): 396.

[25] The term *religious therapeutics* can refer to entire systems or to specific practices and principles, similar to the way the Sanskrit term *sadhana* "practice" or "discipline," can refer to either a whole system --such as the classical eight-limbed Yoga-- or to specific yogic practices such as *asana*.

[26] Ravindra, "Is Religion Psychotherapy?" 14:393.

Good. While philosophy investigates the fundamental principles of being, knowing and valuing, religious inquiry considers these problems from the standpoint of *ultimacy* for the human being. Religion is concerned with the sacred, and with attainment of the human being's highest potential in relation to the sacred. Religious concern has the property of seeking knowledge not for its own sake, but in order to guide human action in the context of attunement with the sacred, for sustaining the good, and toward the aim of salvation or liberation. Classical Yoga's therapeutic paradigm can be excavated from the *Yoga-sutras* as follows:

1. *heya* TO BE ELIMINATED, diagnosis of the ailment to be cured
[√*ha* 'to eliminate', 'to remove', 'to reject', 'to avoid'].
Heya is the illness to be eliminated, i.e., suffering, *duḥkha*.
(YS 2.15, 2.16)

2. *hetu* CAUSE of ailment; etiology
[√*hi* 'to impel', 'to cause'].
The cause of suffering is the contact (*saṃyoga*) between
Seer and Seen, which is caused by ignorance.
(YS 17 & 24)

3. *hana* REMOVAL of ailment; the healing goal, theory of cure
[√*ha* 'to eliminate', 'to remove', 'to reject', 'to avoid'].
The remedy for suffering is removal of ignorance,
which eliminates *saṃyoga* or conjunction of Seer and Seen.
(YS 2.25)

4. *hanopaya* MEANS OF REMOVAL of ailment; remedy, therapeutics
[√*ha*, 'to remove; *hana* 'removal'
+ *upa* 'towards', √*ay* 'to go'].
The means of removing suffering is discriminative wisdom
(*viveka khyati*), which is attained by practice of the eightfold yoga.
(YS 2.26, 2.28, 2.29)

Yoga's Diagnosis of the Human Condition

Yoga's metaphysics diagnoses the human condition as a state of suffering due to ignorance whose specific form is misidentification of self with materiality. By understanding the principles that govern nature and the human being, a yogin can "diagnose and thus overcome his fundamental metaphysical illness of 'mis-identification with matter'."[77] Misery, according to the *Yoga-sutras*, can and should be prevented (YS 2.16). The cause of misery is "the conjunction (*saṃyoga*) of the Seer and the Seen" (YS 2.17). Seer and Seen designate the two forms of primordial Being: *puruṣa and prakṛti*, consciousness and materiality. The Seer is the true self, *puruṣa*. *Prakṛti* exists for the sake of *puruṣa*; their conjunction serves the *puruṣa's* "recognition of the self-natures of the two powers" (YS 2.23, SK 21). Their conjunction ends when it has caused "knowledge of nature of the knower," which is emancipation (YBh 2.23). Liberation or independence, *kaivalya*, is achieved with the individual *puruṣa's* recognition of its self-nature as consciousness, wholly independent of *prakṛti* and all its material evolutes, including the human mind and body, and everything else in the manifest universe.

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[77] Frank Podgorski, "Saṃkhya-Yoga Meditation: Psycho-Spiritual Transvaluation," *Journal of Dharma* 2 (April 1977): 158.

The co-presence of *prakṛti* and *puruṣa*, Seer and Seen, engenders the manifest world by disturbing the equilibrium of the *guṇas*, the three "strands" comprising all matter: *sattva*, of the nature of purity, illumination and awareness; *rajas*, of the nature of activity; and *tamas*, of the nature of inertia (SK 12-21). The guṇas are also the three *qualities* characterizing all things. In Yoga, states of mind are described as sattvic, rajasic, and tamasic (TV 1.1, YBh 1.2); "Mental essence is by nature purity; but it puts on impurity by the taint of disturbing energy (*rajas*) and inertia (*tamas*)" (YBh 1.16). *Puruṣa* is pure consciousness, that is, consciousness entirely independent of *prakṛti* and the *guṇas*, without content and free of materiality. However, the individual *puruṣa* fails to recognize itself as pure consciousness, because "even though pure, it cognizes by reflecting or imitating the contents of the mind" (YS 2.20), i.e., by reflecting the *buddhi* or intelligence which presents objects of knowledge to the *puruṣa*. The *Tattva-vaiśaradī* gives this analogy:

> Although the moon is not as a matter of fact transferred into pure water, it is, as it were, transferred into it. So also, the power of consciousness, although it is not actually transferred into the *buddhi*, yet it is, as it were, transferred into it, because it is reflected into it (TV 2.20).

The Saṃkhya metaphysics that grounds Yoga accounts for Being in terms of 25 constituents: *puruṣa*, *prakṛti*, and *prakṛti's* 23 evolutes. From *prakṛti* emerges *Mahat*, "the Great," which is the basis of the principle of intelligence called *buddhi*. The other evolutes of *prakṛti* are ego, mind, the 5 sense faculties and 5 organs of action, and the 5 subtle elements and 5 corresponding

gross elements that comprise the manifest cosmos. The human being's instrument of cognition, *karaṇa*, consists of 13 elements: *buddhi* or the power of intelligence [√*budh*, 'to know', 'to wake']; *manas* or mind [√*man*, 'to think']; and *ahaṃkara* or ego [*aham*, 'I'; √*kṛ*, 'to do', 'to make']. The threefold "interior organ" comprised of *buddhi*, *manas*, and *ahaṃkara*, (called *antaḥkarana* by Saṃkhya, and *citta* in Yoga's metaphysics) has "as its sphere" the five sense faculties or *buddhīndriyas*: vision, taste, smell, hearing, and touch, and the five faculties of action (*karmendriyas*): voice, hands, feet, excretory organs, and sex organs (SK 26,33). Mind is of the nature of both a sense-faculty and an organ of action (SK 27).

The three *guṇas* mark the categories of *prakṛti's* evolutes. *Citta* and the 10 faculties of sense and action are of the nature of *sattva* or purity and awareness. The dynamic guṇa, *rajas*, incites the activity of the otherwise motionless *sattva* and *tamas*. *Tamas* is the nature of the 5 gross elements or *mahabhutas* and the 5 corresponding subtle elements or *tanmatras*. The five *mahabhutas* (and their corresponding tanmatras) are: earth (smell), water (taste), fire (form), air (touch) and *akaśa* or Space (sound). The *Saṃkhya-karika* describes the *tanmatras* as "non-specific," and says that from them emerge the five specific gross elements (SK 38). Gerald Larson notes that the *Karika* does not explain how this generation occurs,[28] and that Dasgupta describes the

[28] Gerald James Larson, *Classical Samkhya, An Interpretation of its History and Meaning* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass 1969, 1979) 187-88.

tanmatras as extremely subtle "potentials."[29] Each of the mahabhutas has a corresponding sense faculty in the human being: earth: *sense of smell*, water: *sense of taste*, fire: *vision*, air: *hearing*, and *akaśa*: *touch* (SKB 38).

Metaphysics and soteriology are intimately related in classical Yoga. Essential elements of Yoga's metaphysics and soteriology are these reciprocal functions:

1) Discriminative knowledge permitting discernment of the true Self as *puruṣa*;

2) Disentanglement from materiality and from materially-based passion that causes suffering and impedes self-realization.

> *Sva-svami-śaktyoḥ svarupopalabdhi-hetuḥ saṃyogaḥ.*
>
> The purpose of the conjunction (*saṃyogaḥ*) of the owned [*prakṛti*, materiality] and the owner [*puruṣa*, consciousness], is the *puruṣa's* recognition of the self-natures of the two powers.
> YS 2.23
>
> *Tasya hetur avidya.*
>
> The cause of the conjunction is ignorance [i.e., *puruṣa's* ignorance of its own real nature].
> YS 2.24
>
> *Tad-abhavat saṃyogabhavo hanaṃ tad dṛśeh kaivalyam.*
>
> By elimination of ignorance, the conjunction of materiality and consciousness is eliminated, and this is liberation of the Seer.
> YS 2.25

The "discernment of the *puruṣa*" is Yoga's principal soteriological effort. Discernment or discriminative knowledge is called *khyati* [√*khya*, 'to see',

[29] Surendranath Dasgupta, *History of Indian Philosophy*, 5 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922, 1957) 1:251.

'to know']. Discriminative knowledge of *purusa*, consciousness, which is the true Self of each person, and also the nature of God, conditions attainment of *vairagya*, "dispassion" or "non-attachment," [vi, 'without'; √*raj*, 'to enjoy']. *Vairagya* is the state of cessation of desire for the *gunas*.

> *Tat param purusa-khyater gunavaitrsnyam.*
>
> That *vairagya* is highest wherein due to discernment of the *purusa*, there is no thirst for the gunas [i.e., no thirst for objects, which are formed of *gunas*, the three basic constituents of matter]. YS 1.16

Cessation of desire for the *gunas* and their products is equivalent to freedom from entanglement in materiality. Entanglement in materiality results from ignorance of one's self-nature as *purusa* or consciousness, in other words, non-discrimination of self from materiality. Ignorance, *avidya*, is the root cause of bondage and suffering. *Purusa-khyati*, discernment of Self, is the remedy for ignorance --the means of liberation from passion and suffering. Thus, *Purusa-khyati* is the principle medicament in Yogic religious therapeutics.

The Yogic Remedy: An eightfold means to discriminative knowledge & self-realization

Ignorance, *avidya* [*a*, 'not'; √*vid*, 'to know'], refers particularly to the Self's ignorance of its true nature. The person in his ultimate nature is *purusa*, pure consciousness, that is, consciousness free from the material elements that comprise body-mind and world, and free from mental contents and activity. Classical Yoga is an eightfold remedy to inhibit the activity of the

mind, so that the Seer ceases to identify himself with the *vṛttis* or mental processes, and becomes established in his true Self-nature, *sva-rupa* (YS 1.2-3). The *Tattva-vaiśaradī* clarifies:

> By the word *svarupa*, one's own nature, the author excludes the appearance of the calm, the ruffled and the dull, which have been fastened upon it. The nature of the *puruṣa* is consciousness alone, unaffected by the contact (of objects placed alongside), not the cognitive action of the *buddhi* appearing as calm, etc.
> TV 1.3

Because ignorance is considered the source of bondage, liberation requires right knowledge. The importance of knowledge in Yoga is not limited to problems of epistemology, for in Yoga, knowledge --higher or discriminative knowledge-- is itself the remedy for the human condition.

Yoga utilizes Saṃkhya theory of knowledge. Right knowledge and wrong knowledge, along with the other mental processes or *vṛttis* --literally "turnings" [√*vṛt*, 'to turn']-- are to be stopped by a series of preliminary and meditative practices (YS 1.2). *Nirodha* [√*rudh* 'to stop', 'to obstruct'], stoppage of the *vṛttis*, embodies Yoga's goal: In the state of *nirodha*, the Seer is established in its own essential and fundamental nature (YS 1.3). In other states, the Seer identifies with the *vṛttis* (YS 1.4). Vacaspati gives another analogy for the *puruṣa's* knowing by means of being reflected in *buddhi*, but then mistaking the *buddhi* for itself: The case of one who looks into a dirty mirror, and concludes, "I am dim" (TV 1.4).

The *vṛttis* or processes of the mind occur in five forms: right knowledge, wrong knowledge, mental constructions (based on words without corresponding objects, e.g., imagination, and logical constructions), sleep, and memory (YS 1.5,6). Yoga's fivefold classification of *vṛttis* provides an elegant account of the innumerable possible instances of human cognition. Right knowledge and wrong knowledge are both derived from contact of sensory-faculties with the external world. Memory and mental constructions don't involve contact with the external world, but instead they utilize knowledge acquired previously. Memory is the accurate reproduction of previously experienced perceptions, but in *vikalpa* or mental construction, constructions of imagination or logic are linked in forms or sequences that do not have corresponding objects in the external world. Dream experience is a form of *vikalpa* where the will has no control over mental images, but in *nidra*, or dreamless sleep, there are no mental images. Dreamless sleep resembles the one-pointed mind for which Yoga strives, but sleep originates in *tamas*, and is thus contrary to the higher knowledge-states of *samadhi* (TV 1.10). Complex *vṛttis* may fall in two or more of the five groups, but Yoga holds that any kind of ordinary mental activity can be accounted for according to the five-fold classification of *vṛttis*.[30] Under the heading of right knowledge, Saṃkhya and Yoga accept three means or *pramaṇas*: perception, inference, and testimony or

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[30] I.K. Taimni, *The Science of Yoga* (Wheaton, IL: Theosophical Publishing House, 1961, 1986) 14-15.

verbal communication (knowledge gained from a reliable authority, ordinarily a person, text or scripture). Yoga seeks to suppress states of ordinary knowedge, and to cultivate higher knowledge. The person's true nature is consciousness, but "consciousness" does not denote the fluctuating states of mind wherein we experience right and wrong cognition, imagining, dreaming and logicizing, memory, and sleep. The mental fluctuations of these states are to be stilled by *abhyasa*, persistent effort for establishment in *citta-vṛtti-nirodha* or suppression of mental activity. Along with *abhyasa* is practiced *vairagya*, non-attachment (YS 1.12-16). The exercise of *abhyasa* and *vairagya* lead to development of higher knowledge, permitting realization of the self as pure consciousness. Knowledge in Yoga has two domains:

1) Ordinary knowledge

2) Higher knowledge upon which liberation depends

> *Śrutānumana-prajñabhyam anya-viṣaya viśeṣarthatvat.*
>
> Higher knowledge (*prajña*) is different from knowledge based on inference or reliable authority, because it has particulars as its object.
> YS 1.49

Higher knowledge cognizes persons' true natures as *puruṣas*, and the infinitesimal constituents that comprise the inner nature of objects. "Particulars" in YS 1.49 refers to these objects of higher knowledge, while inferential and verbal cognition are capable only of knowing objects as "generals" (YBh 1.49). Higher knowledge is attainable in *samadhi*, the culmination of Yoga's eight accessories. *Samadhi* itself has a number of successive knowledge-states leading

to final liberation. Knowledge attained in Yogic meditation grasps objects of knowledge that cannot be grasped through sensory experience, inference or authority --most importantly, knowledge of the true nature of Self as *puruṣa*. Swami Adidevananda remarks that "The empirical soul is sick as long as it is isolated from the universal spirit"[31] Religious liberation in Yoga overcomes the sickness of this isolation by seeking a desirable form of isolation, *kaivalya*, independence of the Self from body-mind and materiality. The means to this independence is discriminative higher knowledge, attained by systematic cultivation of body/mind and consciousness.

Soteriology:
Self-Realization by Healing the Afflictions (kleśas)

The highest purpose of yoga, said Swami Ramakrishnananda, "is to secure the necessary discipline for the purpose of awakening the spiritual consciousness of man."[32] Non-establishment in self-nature is a consequence of the Seer's assimilation with the activities of the mind, and non-discrimination of the self from one's mental processes results from "afflictions" or *kleśas* [√*kliś*, 'to distress, 'to torment']. With the concept of the *kleśas*, the idea of Yoga as a religious therapeutic comes into sharp focus, for Yoga's soteriology is directed to removal of these afflictions, which cause suffering and prevent liberative

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[31] Swami Adidevananda, *Yoga as a Therapeutic Fact* (Mysore: University of Mysore: Prasaranga, 1966) 52.

[32] Swami Ramakrishnananda, "Yoga," *Brahmavadin 1895-1914*, vol. 2: *Yoga* (Bangalore: Swami Vivekananda Seva Samithi, 1984) 11.

self-realization. Dasgupta tells us that Yoga's goal, the transformation of the *buddhi* (the power of intelligence) into its purest state, where it steadily reflects the true nature of *puruṣa*, requires more than knowledge: "...a graduated course of practice is necessary."

> This graduated practice should be so arranged that by generating the practice of living higher and better modes of life, and steadying the mind on its subtler states, the habits of ordinary life may be removed.[33]

As in other Indian traditions, liberation in Yoga depends on cultivation of higher knowledge, but Yoga is distinguished by its incorporation of a systematic means of subduing, purifying, and vitalizing the body and body-mind to help bring about attainment of higher stages of consciousness, discriminative wisdom, and liberation. Yoga does not concern itself with the sacred in terms of sacred forces, objects, or rites. Yoga is a theistic religion; it includes God, known as Iśvara, along with Saṃkhya's 25 elements. Iśvara is free from the influences of *karma* and free of all afflictions or *kleśas* (YS 1.24). In Iśvara "the seed of omniscience is unsurpassed" (YS 1.25). He is regarded as the great Teacher, teacher of the ancient teachers (YS 1.26), who by compassion wishes to teach knowledge and virtue for the liberation of *puruṣas* (YBh 1.25). One of Iśvara's significant functions is the inspiring of the aspirant in his effort of self-cultivation. The efficacy of *Iśvara-praṇidhana*, resignation or devotion to God, is clear from the *Yoga-sutras*' declaration that *samadhi* may be directly attained by this means (YS 1.23). For some yogins, surrender to God,

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[33] Dasgupta, *History of Indian Philosophy*, 1:266.

--devotion of one's actions of mind, speech and body (YBh 1.23)-- is sufficient for attainment of *samadhi*, and the yogin need not begin with the preliminary limbs of Yoga. However, most practitioners need to start at a more elementary level, so Yoga provides a course of disciplines whereby the *kleśas* may be attenuated and liberative knowledge achieved.

The *kleśas* represent varieties of metaphysical illness, afflictions of mistaken attachment to physical and psychophysical aspects of *prakṛti*. There are five *kleśas*: 1) *avidya* or ignorance of the true nature of reality, 2) *asmita* or egoism, 3) *raga*, the attraction that accompanies the desirable 4) *dveṣa*, the repulsion that accompanies the undesirable and 5) *abhiniveśa*, clinging to life and aversion to death (YS 2.3).

The first *kleśa*, *avidya*, or ignorance, is the source (literally the "field," *kṣetra*) of the others (YS 2.4). *Avidya* is the judging of the impure as pure, the non-Self to be the Self and so on (YS 2.5). Halbfass refers to *avidya* as a "cognitive disease." "*Avidya*," he says, is "a radical misunderstanding of the world and one's true nature. It is essentially self-deception, self-alienation, apparent loss of one's own identity."[34] *Avidya*, or ignorance, is the root of human bondage and suffering, and because the overcoming of ignorance is the crux of liberation in Yoga, the overcoming of the ignorance-based *kleśas* or afflictions is foundational in yogic soteriology. Central to Yogic religious

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[34] Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection*, 252.

therapeutics is the eradication of ignorance and its derivatives, conceived as afflictions.

The second *kleśa* is *asmita*, "I-am-ness" [*asmi*, 'I am'], which is failure to recognize oneself as *puruṣa*, the power of consciousness, and thinking that the self is the *buddhi*, the faculty of cognition that is empowered by *puruṣa* (YS 2.6), (similar to the way the moon sheds light not its own, but by reflecting the light of the sun). *Asmita* is the affliction which pertains to self-identity; it is the mistake of thinking oneself to be the sum of one's mental faculties and their objects. One of the determinants of health is self-identity, and from the standpoint of religious therapeutics, *asmita*, or impaired self-identity, is a fundamental form of spiritual ill-health. Realization of self-identity is equivalent to liberation in Yoga; it means healing the debilitation and suffering resulting from non-establishment in one's essential nature.

In *kaivalya*, *asmita* is replaced by knowledge of Self as *puruṣa*. The *guṇas* cease to transform and to produce modifications to disturb the mind and interfere with self-knowledge. In *kaivalya*, the purity of the *sattva* and the *puruṣa* are equal (3.56). *Sattva*, the *guṇa* whose nature is purity and awareness, designates the human's 13-part instrument of cognition: *citta* (comprised of *buddhi*, *manas* and *ahaṃkara*), along with the 10 faculties of sense and action. The *Yoga-bhaṣya* explains the equilibration of *sattva* with *puruṣa*:

> When the essence of the intelligence (*buddhi*) with the dirt of *rajas* and *tamas* removed, has the notion of the distinctness of the *puruṣa* as its

> sole remaining object, and all the seeds of the afflictions (*kleśas*) are burnt up, then does it, as it were, assume a state of purity similar to that of the *puruṣa* (YBh 3.56).

Purity in this context means absence of activities of the mind, so that the individual *puruṣa*'s true nature as consciousness manifests without limit. The following aphorism on *kaivalya* concludes the *Yoga-sutras*:

> *Puruṣartha śunyanaṃ guṇanaṃ pratiprasavaḥ kaivalyaṃ svarupa-pratiṣṭha va citi-śakter iti.*
>
> Independence (*kaivalya*) is the re-mergence of the *guṇas* [constituents of materiality] back into their latent state [as undifferentiated *prakṛti* or materiality], because of their becoming devoid of the capacity to serve *puruṣa's* purpose. Then *puruṣa* is established in its own true nature, in other words, as pure consciousness.
> YS 4.34

Thus in *kaivalya*, there is cessation of the *guṇas*' transformations, which produce mental activity. The *gunas'* transformations cease when they have fulfilled their object, i.e., the conjunction of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* for the *puruṣa's* recognition of their respective natures, and distinguishing its own nature as consciousness (YS 2.23). The affliction of *asmita*, ignorance of one's true self-nature, is part of the syndrome of *kleśas* that impedes self-realization.

The third and fourth *kleśas*, *raga*, "attraction" [√*raj*, 'to enjoy'] and *dveṣa*, "repulsion" [√*dviṣ*, 'to abhor'] both arise because of attachment, i.e., the Seer's relation to things and experiences such that he is subject to disturbance of mind due to contact with them (YS 2.7,8). For a yogin who has attained the goal of self-realization, his sense-organs still make contact with objects of sensation, but when sensations arise they don't agitate the mind, nor strongly

influence the yogin's experience or actions. *Raga* and *dveṣa* are rooted in ignorance, whose form in this case is failure to distinguish what the *Upaniṣads* call *preya*, pleasure, from *śreya*, the higher good.[35] On Yoga's interpretation, *raga* and *dveṣa* result from entanglement in *prakṛti*, and taking *prakṛti's* manifestations to be ultimate reality.

The fifth and final *kleśa* is *abhiniveśa*, desire for life or aversion to death [*abhi*, 'into', 'toward,'; *ni* 'completely', 'intensely'; viś 'to enter', 'to be engrossed']. This affliction produces suffering by causing anxiety about death. Death is ultimately an illusion, for the physical body is an evolute of *prakṛti*, thus not ultimately real. Death is merely the dissolution of the material constituents that comprise the body, not the termination of a person's being. In Iyengar's words, yogic practice permits the *sadhaka* to experience "unity in the flow of intelligence, and the current of self-energy... He understands that the current of self, the life-force, active while he is alive, merges with the universe when it leaves his body at death."[36] Aversion to death involves *asmita* and the mis-identification of body, mind, and senses as the self. Clinging to life indicates attachment to sensory and cognitive experience, and makes one subject to suffering as a result of separation from pleasant experience and contact with painful experience. Fear of death derives

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[35] *Katha Upaniṣad*, 2.1-2.

[36] B.K.S. Iyengar, *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patañjali* (London and San Francisco: Harper Collins 1993) 110-11.

also from attachment to a sense of 'I': "In all living beings exists the self-benediction, 'Would that I were never to cease'" (YBh 2.9)

Along with the five *kleśas* are the nine obstacles or *antarayaḥ*, [*antar*, 'between'; √ay, 'to go']: 1) Illness, 2) mental languor, 3) doubt and indecision, 4) carelessness, 5) physical and mental laziness, 6) lack of detachment, or sensual incontinence, 7) erroneous views, 8) failure to achieve a stage of *samadhi*, and 9) instability in maintaining an achieved stage (YS 1.30). Illness, *vyadhi*, is first on the list of obstacles and is highly significant for a theory of religious therapeutics, for physical illness is specifically identified as interfering with religious progress. Illness and the other obstacles disturb the mind, and "turn the aspirant away from the direct path of Yoga" (TV 1.30). Yoga conceptualizes illness in Āyurvedic terms, as disequilibrium of the body's three constituent *dhatus* or supports (YBh. 1.30, TV 1.30). Besides the fact that illness can be an obstacle to religious progress, it can be conditioned by mental states, which suggests the hygienic dimension of religious therapeutics in Yoga: the therapeutic value of Yoga for treating psychophysical problems. Swami Adidevananda asserts:

> ...functional diseases are caused by mental conditions which affect the nervous system. Maladjustment, insecurity, inordinate ambition, fear, frustration and similar tensions affect mental conditions. Spiritual psychology properly used at an early stage could arrest the progress of symptoms. Hence the contribution of Yoga therapeutics should be properly understood.[37]

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[37] Swami Adidevananda, *Yoga as a Therapeutic Fact*, 31.

Swami Adidevananda refers here to Yoga's efficacy for stabilizing mental disturbances, which have adverse effects on the body. There is cooperation between hygienic and the soteriological dimensions of the Yogic religious therapeutic: the religious path of Yoga also has curative power for ordinary psychophysical maladies.

The companions of the obstacles are the "symptoms of distraction" or *vikṣepas* [*vi* 'out', 'asunder'; √*kṣip*, 'to throw']. The theory of *vikṣepas* accords with Yoga's treatment of mind and body as the primary dimensions of a unitary human entity. The first of the four *vikṣepas* is *duḥkha*: suffering or mental distress, conditioned by physical or mental factors (YBh 1.31). The other *vikṣepas* are despair, unsteadiness of the limbs or body, and unsteady breathing (YS 1.31). These link the mental with the physical: mental distraction has physical manifestations including shallow, irregular, or labored respiration. Yoga prescribes a preventative approach to the *vikṣepas*: one-pointed concentration, rather than permitting one's mind to be fragmented in several directions. One should practice mental concentration on a single object or principle in order to achieve one-pointedness, *ekagrata*, in place of a distracted mind. Curing *vikṣepa* requires the mind's clarification or purification, *prasadana*, achievable by cultivating compassion, good cheer, and indifference towards vice; by control of the breath, and other means (1.33-39).

Overcoming the *kleśas* is directly related to achievement of *samadhi*. Subduing the obstacles, *antarayah*, and eliminating *vikṣepa*, distraction, helps

develop the concentration necessary for *samadhi*. In the *kleśas* is rooted the reservoir of *karmas* or actions, which produce the myriad experiences in present and future lives (YS 2.12-13); "...the mental field becomes a field for the production of the fruit of actions only when is it watered by the stream of afflictions" (TV 2.13). When the *kleśas* are destroyed, the vehicle of *karmas* cannot produce fruit, because their generative power is destroyed. The *karmas* result in joy or sorrow according to whether their cause is virtue or vice (YS 2.14), but *all* is misery to persons who have developed *viveka* or the power to discriminate:

> *Pariṇama-tapa-saṃskara-duḥkhair guṇa-vṛtti-virodhac ca duḥkham eva sarvaṃ vivekinaḥ*
>
> All is suffering to discriminating persons, because of pain resulting from change, anxiety, and subliminal impressions (*saṃskaras*), and because of opposition among the mind's modifications (*vṛttis*) and the basic constituents of materiality (*guṇas*).
> YS 2.15

Yoga's knowledge-based remedy for the dis/ease of human bondage is the dispersion of ignorance, permitting the dissociation of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*. This is liberation from the pain of the human condition. How is ignorance to be dispersed? By "unwavering discriminative knowledge," *viveka-khyati* (YS 2.26). This produces higher knowledge: *prajña* (YS 2.27).

> *Yogaṅganuṣṭhanad aśuddhi-kṣaye jñana-dīptir a viveka-khyateḥ.*
>
> By practice of the limbs of Yoga, on destruction of impurity, higher knowledge (*jñana*) shines forth, reaching up to discriminative knowing (*viveka-khyati*) [i.e, the power to distinguish *puruṣa* from materiality].
> YS 2.28

Liberative knowledge is not only therapeutic for transcending suffering, but engenders attainment of the human's soteriological potential: "The genuine yogin is a metaphysical doctor, who can not only cure the diseases of the mind, but also who can help us in discovering the possibilities of human consciousness."[38]

On the basis of Yoga's metaphysical view of the person as a psychophysical being at the empirical level, but ultimately an entity of the nature of pure consciousness, health as wholeness and well-being can be ascribed of the person as *puruṣa* and the term *healing* may properly denote the process of liberative self-realization. Yoga is a fruitful source for insight into religious therapeutics, owing to its extensive analysis of the nature of the human mind-body and consciousness, and its broad-ranging prescriptions for actualization of soteriological potential. These practices spontaneously promote physical and psychophysical health. However, particularly significant about classical Yoga is the way cultivation of the psychophysical person and health contributes to ultimate transcendence of the body/mind.

Value Theory:
Health and the Good in Yoga

Value theory is an aspect of Yogic religious therapeutics that clearly exhibits the reciprocal relation of Yoga's soteriology and its therapeutic impetus. The *summum bonum* in the classical Indian systems "is attained when all

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[38] Swami Adidevananda, *Yoga as a Therapeutic Fact*, 15.

impurities are removed and the pure nature of the self is thoroughly and permanently apprehended..."[39] In Saṃkhya-Yoga the highest good is the *puruṣa's* realization of itself as pure consciousness. In Yoga, the means to this end is stoppage of the activities of the mind, and development of *vivekaja-jñana*, wisdom born of discriminative knowledge.

> The stream of mind flows both ways; it flows toward good and it flows toward evil. That which flows on to perfect independence (*kaivalya*) down the plane of discriminative knowledge, is named the stream of happiness. That which leads to re-birth and flows down the plane of undiscriminative ignorance, is the stream of sin (YBh 1.12).

The good is that which supports the physical and mental purity necessary for attainment of liberative knowledge. Specifically, Yoga's ethical ideal is *vairagya*, desirelessness.[40] The mind's tendency toward activity, and the emotions that result, are to be checked by cultivation of *vairagya* and its companion practice, *abhyasa*, persistent effort to bring the mind from fragmented activity to a state of "calm one-pointedness and purity" (TV 1.13). Yoga's ethics emphasize sattvic or pure actions and motives, especially for the sake of calming the mind. *Sattva*, or purity, characterizes health-preserving and health-promoting practices

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[39] Dasgupta, *History of Indian Philosophy*, 1:75.

[40] S. Cromwell Crawford, *The Evolution of Hindu Ethical Ideals* (Calcutta: Firma K.L. Mukhopadhyay, 1974) 152.

Ethics is the foundation of the eight limbs of Yoga, and is integral to yogic religious therapeutics. Systems of religious therapeutics are grounded in theories of value, and the use of specific religiously therapeutic procedures is an exercise of intelligence in service of the good, as recommended in the Scepticism of Sextus Empiricus. A person's practice in matters such as diet, sleep, hygiene, exercise, and mental attitude constitute a fabric of daily life, grounded in one's fundamental values (though behavior is consistent with values to varying degrees). Particular physical and mental disciplines incorporate the cultivation of good habits, not just for everyday success, but to serve an aim of progressive self-transformation. The first limb of Patañjala Yoga is *yama*, embracing five self-restraints, which together constitute the "Great Vow" common to many of the Indian traditions. Yoga's second limb is *niyama*, "commitments." While *yama* involves restraint of action, *niyama* requires performance of five types of morally-based disciplines.

1st limb: *Yama*, Self-Restraints

Ahiṃsa, non-injury, the first of the restraints, is "not causing injury to any living creature, in any way, at any time" (YBh 2.30). *Ahiṃsa* is a fundamental ethical principle in Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism, and in Yoga it is the foundation of all the other ethical restraints and observances (YBh 2.30). The restraints pertain to both attitude and action, and non-injury must be practiced toward all sentient beings including oneself. Injury can result in

damage to body, mind, projects, and/or property. Injury compromises health, and this is one reason health is of concern in ethics. However, health in Yoga's ethics has significance beyond this. Even though Yoga's aim is spiritual well-being, not mere well-being of body and mind, the well-being that Yoga seeks in ultimate liberation requires self-discipline of body and mind which contributes to psychophysical health. While Yoga's goal is religious self-realization, health is regarded as instrumental to this path; therefore, to maintain one's health is an ethical obligation.

Non-healthful practices (e.g., excesses in diet) violate the principle of *ahiṃsa*. Even haste is a form of violence, for damage to self and/or others can result from rushing to do things without sufficient time. Thus behaviors inciting stress-related syndromes, such as heart-disease, aggravated by a sense of time-pressure, violate the principle of *ahiṃsa*, so they are contrary to the good, as conceived by Yoga. Physician Larry Dossey notes the modern Western cultural presupposition that linear time is "running out," and our lives with it, and explores the medical implications of human response to time-markers: "the watch, the alarm clock, the morning coffee, and the hundreds of self-inflicted expectations that we build into our daily routine."

> Our sense of time is not only a major determinant in our awareness of pain, it affects our health by influencing the development and course of specific diseases.

Dossey submits that we suffer from "hurry sickness,"

> --expressed as heart disease, high blood pressure, or depression of our immune function, leading to an increased susceptibility to infection and cancer.[41]

The metaphysical foundations of Yoga's soteriology counter the distressing and erroneous view that self is body, and that one's existence ceases at physical death. Yoga's ethical foundation of non-injury is a comprehensive discipline implying freedom from all destructiveness, whether based in ill-will, or in ignorance alone. In terms of personal health maintenance, *Ahiṃsa* requires adjustment of attitudes and behavior to prevent direct damage to the body, and avoidance of the mental distress that conditions physical illness.

Satya, truthfulness, the second of the retraints, requires that one neither express non-truths nor omit truths. The purpose of speech is the communication of knowledge. Speech is to be used for the good of others, not to injure, so Yoga prohibits speech that is "deceptive, confused, or barren in knowledge" (YBh 2.30). As with all yogic ethical principles, along with preserving others' well-being, *satya* serves the purpose of preventing disturbances to the mind. For example, untruthfulness often perpetuates complications engendering distress in self and others. This distress might have manifestations in the form of physical health-problems, as well as generating obstructive karmic consequences. Another reason for truthfulness is to encourage the operation of *buddhi*, the faculty of discriminative awareness. *Buddhi* allows the

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[41] Larry Dossey, *Space, Time, and Medicine* (Boulder and London: Shambhala, 1982) 49-50.

yogin to see beyond illusions, and its cultivation requires truthfulness in word, thought, and deed. Truthfulness has the meaning of *integrity*, and this means in yogic terms the integration of one's knowledge, values, and action. The practice of truthfulness at the mundane level is requisite for grasping truth at the ultimate level, the truth of *puruṣa* as the ultimate real.

Asteya, non-stealing, refers to any kind of misappropriation, whether of goods, money, or undeserved praise or privilege. Mahatma Gandhi considered any possession of goods beyond those needed for the basic maintenance of life to be a form of theft, as long as there are persons whose basic needs remain unmet.[42] Gandhi's thinking informs the idea of the health of communities: a community's well-being depends in part on each citizen's having access to resources for a wholesome life.

The *Yoga-sutra's* commentators emphasize that not just theft, but any inclination toward misappropriation must be overcome: "Inasmuch as the functioning of speech and body depends upon the mind, the mental modification is mentioned here as the principle factor" (TV 2.30). Non-stealing requires development of one's awareness of the subtler forms of misappropriation which may arise as one eradicates cruder forms of dishonesty. Consonant with Yoga's prescription of cultivation of consciousness as the means of liberation, truthfulness and non-stealing demonstrate the function of religious therapeutics to

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[42] Dhirendra Mohan Datta, *The Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1953, 1972) 98.

perpetuate one's spiritual evolution through purificatory efforts carried out on the stage of the body, but with the aim of purifying the consciousness.

Brahmacarya, the fourth *yama*, is restraint of sensual and especially of sexual enjoyment. Again, this means not merely abstinence from sensual activities and emotions, but eradication of attachment to them, because craving various forms of sensual enjoyment disturbs the mind and causes suffering. The *Yoga-sutras* list benefits of each of the *yamas*, and the benefit offered for sexual continence is vigor (YS 2.38). The practioner sublimates the body for the sake of greater spiritual power: vital energy ordinarily discharged in sexual activity may be rechanneled within a spiritual current. The capability of teaching Yoga to others requires attainment of the power consequent on *brahmacarya* (YBh 2.38).

Aparigraha, non-acquisitiveness, is the fifth and final *yama*. This principle calls for repudiation of all possessions and circumstances not essential for the maintenance of the body. Here again, the health-related warrants underlying this principle are preservation of others' well-being, and elimination of disturbances to the mind, in this case, concerns about the acquisition, maintenance, and loss of material possessions. Spiritually, non-acquisitiveness breaks the bonds of identification of self with possessions, and the pleasures and pains that go with gaining, having, and losing possessions.

2nd limb: *Niyama*, Commitments

Śauca, purity, is of utmost importance in Yoga. Purity means physical cleanliness, mental clarity, and moral rightness. Purity in physical cleanliness --internal and external-- is achieved by bathing, and by various "washings" with air in *pranayama*, and with water and other means in yogic physical purification techniques.[43] Especially important is "washing away the impurities of the mind" (YBh 2.32). In ordinary human life, impurity is pervasive, and yogic religious therapeutics replace impure physical and mental materials and actions with increasingly pure ones. What is purity, in a yogic sense? The *guṇa* called *sattva* is purity itself. To purify is to support the predomination of *sattva*, the *guṇa* which is the nature of *buddhi*, the power of intelligence. Functionally, something is pure to the extent that it permits the manifestation of an entity's true nature as *puruṣa*, and impure to the extent that it supports entanglement in *prakṛti*, thus impeding the expression of *puruṣa*.

Purity may be understood in its various applications in terms of the three "bodies" or "vehicles" comprising the person (VC 87-97). The **gross body** is made pure particularly by consumption of *sattvic* food and drink. The *Bhagavadgīta* classifies types of foods according to the three *guṇas*

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[43] Haṭha Yoga's six *kriyas* or cleansing actions involve washing and stimulation (with air, water, or strips of fabric) of various passages of the body (*Haṭha Yoga Pradipika*, 2.21-37). For detailed information about the *kriyas* and their variations, see Swami Kuvalayananda, *Yoga Therapy* (New Delhi: India Ministry of Health, 1963) 56-74.

(BhG 17.7-10). *Sattvic* food is light, fresh, and nourishing, and includes grains, seeds, fruit, vegetables, and dairy foods, according to their agreeability to a given person's constitution. Sattvic food promotes health, *arogya* (BhG 17.8). The stimulating *rajasic* foods are very hot, bitter, sour, dry, salty, or excessively spiced, and include beverages containing caffeine. Rajasic foods, the *Gīta* says, cause pain and sickness, *amaya* (BhG 17.9). *Tamasic* foods promote inertia and restrict *prana*, the vital life energy. *Tamasic* foods include flesh, alcohol, and fermented foods such as vinegar, and foods of any type that are stale or spoiled.[44] R.S. Khare identifies two main Hindu formulations of the relationship of food, self, and ultimate reality. The *Gīta* represents the position that "You eat what you are," i.e., dietary preferences reflect a person's nature as *sattvic*, *rajasic*, or *tamasic*.

> The second formulation bases itself on the upaniṣadic instruction --pure nourishment leads to pure mind or nature" (*aharaśuddhau sattvaśuddhi*; see Hume, *Principal Upanisads*, 1985, 262). As a corollary therefore, a healthy body is considered to be a byproduct of discriminating and controlled nourishment. Diseases follow from flaws--moral, mental, and physical.[45]

Khare's analysis corroborates the idea of religious therapeutics in the context of Indian gastrosemantics. He refers to the work of Hindu holy persons who dispense healing foods and herbs:

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[44] Sivananda Yoga Vedanta Center, *The Sivananda Companion to Yoga* (NY: Simon and Schuster, 1983) 80.

[45] R.S. Khare, "Food with Saints" in *The Eternal Food*, ed. R.S. Khare (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992) 29.

> Over time, they acquire the dual therapeutic-spiritual authority which even *vaidyas* (or "doctors") cannot dispute... If they are known to cure incurable bodily diseases, they also treat the "disease" of transmigration--*saṃsara* (also called *bhavaroga*).[46]

Yoga philosophy holds that the very material of the physical body is comprised to a great extent by the *guṇas* obtained in the diet, and consonant with the upanaṣadic dietary principle, "You are what you eat," Yoga's goal of dietary purification is the actual replacement of the body's coarser material with more refined material.

The **subtle body** is purified by replacing disturbed thoughts and emotions with more refined and subtle ones. Purification is a self-perpetuating process, because the more pure body and mind become, the more they incline toward pure substances, thoughts and emotions. An important purificatory practice for the subtle vehicle is the use of *mantras*. *Mantras* involve sound, the primordial one being *Om*, the designator of Iśvara (YS 1.27). The vibrations involved in resonating or hearing these sounds permits an influx of spiritual force which over time tends to remove obscurity from the subtle vehicle. In addition to the sounds themselves, some *mantras* have meanings that are purificatory insofar as the practitioner's ignorance is dispelled by them.

The **causal or karmic body** is the locus of karmic actvity; it is the body constituted of all the consequences --good and bad-- of a person's actions in the present life and prior ones. Purification in the domain of the causal or

[46] R.S. Khare, "Food with Saints," 34.

karmic body means burning up the residue of past actions so that no new consequences result, and so that no new actions are taken productive of further karmic results. For a yogin, *karmas* are "neither white nor black" (YS 4.7), that is, neither good nor evil: not white, for the yogin gives up the fruit of action, and not black, because he does not perform actions (YBh. 4.7). Yoga's treatment of the mental and the physical as reciprocally related dimensions of the unitary person is evident in the range of applications of *śauca*. Purity is a necessary condition for psychophysical health, and the spiritual purity sustained thereby is in turn instrumental for the ultimate healing of liberation.

Saṃtoṣa, the second element of *niyama*, means contentment, "the absence of desire to obtain more of the necessities of life than one already possesses" (YBh 2.32). *Saṃtoṣa* means absence of greed, resulting in calmness and serenity regardless of external or internal circumstances. Such contentment is one of the determinants of mental health. Contentment is a means to the end of mental equanimity, the state wherein mind is without disturbance, and Self-nature can be realized. To practice contentment is more than stilling mental disturbances as they intrude, it entails preventing their arising.

Tapas, translated as austerity, self-discipline, or purification, "consists in endurance of the pairs of opposites" such as heat and cold, and the desire to eat (YBh 2.32). The verb $\sqrt{}$*tap* means 'to heat', and *tapas* may be likened to the purification of metals by intense heat so that the dross is burned away and the pure metal remains. *Tapas* involves fasting and observance of various

vows, such as the vow of silence. *Tapas* may also be performed by practicing *praṇayama*. *Tapas* ordinarily involves self-discipline of the physical body, with the intention of weakening the association of the physical body with consciousness, making possible an awareness of the body as "not-self." Impurity leads to illness --physical, mental and spiritual-- and *tapas* represents practices that not only remove impurities but contribute to endurance and non-susceptibility to help make the body/mind a fit vehicle for the spiritual journey.

Svadhyaya means self-education. *Adhyaya* means study or education; its verbal root is $\sqrt{dh\bar{i}}$, 'to think'. The prefix *sva*, 'self', underscores the sadhaka's individual effort toward self-realization by exerting his or her intelligence. *Svadhyaya* includes study of scriptures, pondering religious and philosophical questions, recitation of *mantras*, and ultimately, leaving the texts and disciplines behind and gaining knowledge from within oneself.

Iśvara-praṇidhana, surrender to Iśvara or God, means "the doing of all actions to fulfill the purpose of the Great Teacher" (YBh 2.32). Dedicating oneself to the will of God destroys the ego through merging the individual with the sacred, the all-embracing consciousness. This *niyama* is embodied in the *Bhagavadgīta's* prescription of *niśkama karma*, acting without desire, or Karma Yoga, the yoga of action: acting to carry out one's responsibility without attachment to the good or bad results of the action, so that one may serve divine will rather than one's own. Surrender to Iśvara may also take the form of Bhakti Yoga, the yoga of devotion, where union is achieved through love of

God. Whether accomplished by the yoga of action or the yoga of devotion, surrender to God produces dissolution of the "I" or *asmita*, and thus conditions *samadhi*, enlightened consciousness devoid of the traps of egoism.

Yoga's prescriptions for re-conditioning the body and mind widens the range of their adaptability, making the practitioner's body, mind and senses less vulnerable to the "pairs of opposites" that keep one mired in physicality and separated from one's true nature. Crawford notes that matter is not equated with evil in Saṃkhya-Yoga, for "both the design and function of *prakṛti* are aimed at the liberation of *puruṣa*."[47] Yet one of Yoga's vital concerns is self-understanding in relation to the material aspects of oneself and the world. The eight limbs of Yoga map out a progressive journey of subduing one's subjection to materiality and its accompanying physical distractions, mental fragmentation, and emotional ups and downs. The foundation of Yoga's eight limbs is a system of ethics that governs relations among persons, but whose root is the individual's mastery of physical and mental dispositions and actions that interfere with stilling the mind.

Physical Practice:
The Soteriological Role of Body and Health in Yoga

The soteriological role of the body in Yoga concerns refining, disciplining, and utilizing the body/mind complex to make it a less obstructive factor and a more suitable instrument for the spirit's purer expression of itself.

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[47] S. Cromwell Crawford, *The Evolution of Hindu Ethical Ideals*, 147.

> Spiritual awareness is invariably preceded by physical health and mental hygiene. The latter are the means for the former. So Yoga may be described as a science of spiritual healing. Yoga methods are superior to other methods in so far as they take man in his totality and do not deal with him superficially.[48]

Health of the body and non-attachment to physicality are cultivated for spiritual progress. Practice of Yoga's ethics, psychophysical disciplines, and procedures for meditation spontaneously promote health, but health is a help to spiritual attainment, and is not itself the goal. The physically-based practices of yoga are *asana* or postures, *pranayama* or control of vital energy by control of breath, and *pratyahara*, withdrawal of the senses. Their chief purpose is preparation of the practitioner for Yoga's final three limbs: Concentration, contemplation and the higher consciousness of *samadhi*, which we may translate as "absorption." The key textual source for study of the external limbs of Yoga is Section Two of the *Yoga-sutras*, *Sadhana-pada*. *Sadhana* means "practice," "discipline," or "means," and pertains to practice conducive to the attainment of a goal. Its verbal root is √*sadh*, 'to accomplish one's goal', or 'to hit a target' (also the root of *sadhu*, 'holy man'). *Sadhaka* refers to a practitioner, a person who undertakes *sadhana* with the purpose of accomplishing an aim, particularly a spiritual aim. The practice of the whole system of eightfold Yoga is a *sadhana*, but the term *sadhana* can also refer to a particular practice, such as *asana*.

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[48] Swami Adidevananda, *Yoga as a Therapeutic Fact*, 37.

3rd Limb: *Āsana*, Postures

Āsana [√*as*, 'to sit'] literally means 'sitting' or 'posture'. Only three of the 196 verses of the *Yogasutras* deal with *asana*.[49] According to Patañjali, the two criteria for proper performance of postures is that they must be steady (*sthira)* and comfortable (*sukham*) (YS 2.46). The main purpose of *asana* is to render the physical body non-disturbing to the mind. This has two primary applications. First, in the stages of meditation of the 6th, 7th and 8th limbs, the mind's activity is successively restricted, and the body is to remain as externally motionless and internally undistracted as possible. The *asanas* are designed so that the body may feel comfortable and thus for the duration of meditation be of no concern to the mind, so that the *sadhaka's* consciousness may take priority in his awareness and being. *Āsana*'s other main function is to develop the body's endurance and equilibrium. Practice of *asana* helps one develop non-attachment to the body and objects of physical enjoyment, and increased capacity for carrying out the responsibilities of life and the yogic path.

Āsana's role in meditation exemplifies the soteriological role of the body in Yoga: Physical well-being is not cultivated as an end in itself, but because refined awareness and discipline of one's physical nature contributes to transcending the limitations of physicality and the ignorance and suffering which

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[49] The *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpika*, Book One, is a major textual source on *asana*.

attend it. Yoga accounts for the human condition from its lowest state of being mired in ignorance and evil, to its highest potential state: realization of its nature as pure consciousness. Yoga is a practical system and provides for individuals to begin the path of Yoga at their own level of awareness and functioning. For most persons, self-understanding and action is deeply rooted in physicality, and Yoga makes use of this fact by providing physical disciplines effective for gaining mastery and insight with respect to one's self-nature.

Performamce of asana also develops endurance and equilibrium. Endurance is the power to act in a sustained way, being "fit" or suited to tasks requiring a continued application of effort and concentration. Endurance refers to an individual's sustained functioning without symptoms of debilitation. The term endurance may suggest a person's application of sustained energy directed toward an accomplishment, whether religious, or for instance, athletic. Equilibrium is another significant determinant of health, and this concept is applicable at a number of levels of functioning. In Āyurvedic medicine, equilibrium signifies a health-supporting relation among the *doṣas*. In physiological terms, equilibrium pertains to conditions such as coordinated nervous and muscular control for maintaining the body's posture, and commensurate intake and output of substances by organs and systems. Psychological equilibrium concerns a person's resilience in maintaining a stable affective state, and functioning effectively when confronted with difficulties. Equilibrium is treated in the *Yogasutras* in terms of "the pairs of opposites."

The mastering of *asana* produces resistance to assault by the pairs of opposites, or *dvandvas* (YS 2.47-48). The *dvandvas*, such as heat and cold, pleasure and pain, may be experienced physically and/or mentally, and they disturb the mind's equilibrium. Freedom from distraction by the *dvandvas* is integral to stilling the *vṛttis* or activities of the mind.

Āsana is mastered by "relaxation of effort" and "meditation on the infinite, *ananta*" (YS 2.47). *Ananta* literally means "without end" [*a*, 'not'; *anta*, 'end'] and can refer to Iśvara. Relaxation of effort means ceasing to give mental attention to maintenance of a posture, so that the body is undisturbed and the conscious mind is gradually freed from agitation by physical sensation. Relaxation is a determinant of health, both intrinsically, as a state of relative freedom from unpleasant tension, and instrumentally, as a capacity of resilience that helps one tolerate and recover from the strain of effort.

In *asana* the body must become able to maintain physical stability and to counter deviation from its position during meditation. Iyengar discusses *asana*'s unifying functions as follows:

> Though the practitioner is a subject and the *asana* the object, the *asana* should become the subject and the doer the object, so that sooner or later the doer, the instrument (the body) and the *asana* become one.... The whole body is involved in this process, with the senses, mind, intelligence, consciousness and self...[50]

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[50] B.K.S. Iyengar, *The Tree of Yoga* (Boston: Shambhala, 1988) 55.

He describes *asana's* two aspects as pose and repose. Posing is acting to arrange the body in a particular posture. Reposing is reflecting on the pose and readjusting it

> ....so that the various limbs and parts of the body are positioned in their places in a proper order and feel rested and soothed, and the mind experiences the tranquility and calmness of bones, joints, muscles, fibres, and cells.[51]

Health of the physical body, according to Iyengar, is gained at the level of the cells, which he regards as possessing memory and intelligence. To perform *asanas* properly entails the elimination of dualities between body and mind, mind and *puruṣa*. Through the health of the body, the mind and *puruṣa* are brought closer. The purpose of *asana* is "to lead the mind from attachment to the body towards the light of the soul."[52] In Iyengar's "Tree of Yoga" *asana* is symbolized by branches in their various positions. The roots of the tree represent *yama* (the restraints), and the trunk *niyama* (ethical commitments). The fourth part of Yoga is expansion of the vital energy, *praṇa*, through control of the breath. *Praṇayama* is represented by the leaves of the tree, which permit the tree's respiration.[53]

Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902), who was instrumental in introducing Hinduism to the West, gives brief consideration to *asana* in his lectures on classical or Raja-Yoga. He recommends that one choose a meditation-posture

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[51] Iyengar, *Tree of Yoga*, 54-55.

[52] Iyengar, *Tree of Yoga*, 56.

[53] Iyengar, *Tree of Yoga*, 8, 50-60.

one can maintain for a long time, with the spinal column held straight and free, and the weight of the body supported by the ribs. Vivekananda compares *asana* in classical Yoga to Haṭha Yoga, which emphasizes the health and strength of the physical body. Health in Raja Yoga, he reminds us, is only a means to an end, since an unhealthy or unfit body is the first of the obstructions to Yoga practice.[54]

The effects of *asana* are subtle and powerful. Practice of *asana* inclines one toward more wholesome pursuits. The awareness and vitality granted by *asana* tend to influence a person's choices in avoiding debilitating influences in a range of contexts, for example, unethical dealings, impure foods, and the extremes of sloth or excessive activity and stress. Cultivation of good habits, which in turn improve one's future dispositions, is well exemplified by *asana's* soteriological role for the Yogin. Another result of the regular practice of *asana* is a more acute awareness of one's body and its functioning. Daily *asana* provides an opportunity to take account of physical strengths and weaknesses, flexibility and areas of impeded energy. Throughout the day, one may spontaneously notice his posture and circulation, and adjust the body to a closer approximation of the excellent posture and circulation promoted during the actual performance of *asana*. Circulation refers not just to physical substances such as blood, oxygen, lymph and chyle, but to *praṇa*, the vital energy of the

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[54] Swami Vivekananda, *Complete Works*, 8 vols. (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1847, 1986) 1:137-39).

cosmos and the living organism. *Āsana* "clears the nervous system, causes the energy to flow in the system without obstruction and ensures an even distribution of that energy during *praṇayama*."[55] The practice of Yoga is engaged not only while one does *asana*, *praṇayama*, and meditation, but is a constant commitment. *Āsana* serves to refine one's physical nature to be always more attuned with the subtle praṇic force in oneself, which may be likened to currents within the great ocean of conscious energy that is *puruṣa*.

The soteriological role of the body in Yoga is evident in *asana*'s power as a means for one to appropriate and integrate the conditions of his physical being. This is consonant with Deutsch's presentation of the body as an "achievement concept," and personhood as a matter of integration and achievement.[56] In Yoga, the selfhood that the *sadhaka* seeks to achieve is not that of self as embodied person, but of one's true nature as consciousness. *Āsana* helps the physical body to reveal and awaken the power of consciousness which infuses the material body, thus potentiating the discrimination of *puruṣa* from *prakṛti*.

In addition to its soteriological efficacy, *asana* has physically therapeutic applications. Ayurvedic physician Vasant Lad has shown that Yoga has value for both prevention and cure of illness:

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[55] Iyengar, *Light on the Yoga Sutras*, 150.

[56] Eliot Deutsch, *Creative Being* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1992) 58-69.

> Yoga brings man to the natural state of tranquility which is equilibrium. Thus, yogic exercises have both preventive and curative value. Yogic practices help to bring natural order and balance to the neurohormones and the metabolism and thus provide fortification against stress. Yogic practices for the treatment of stress and stress-related disorders (such as hypertension, diabetes, asthma and obesity) are remarkably effective.[57]

Lad lists appropriate *asanas* for various ailments,[58] as does Iyengar in *Light on Yoga*.[59] An article on *asana* in the journal *Brahmavadin* discusses the importance of health for the achievement of spiritual aspirations, and identifies the joint medical and soteriological function of *asana*:

> The aim of the healing art is twofold inasmuch as it renders the body inpenetrable to disease from the outside and at the same time it does not allow the vital currents in the body to leak out and get exhausted. The postures may be said to be helpful in both these directions.[60]

The cooperation of healing and salvation is embodied in *asana*, which works directly on the improvement and maintenance of physical vitality, but for the purpose of conditioning the body/mind for ultimate, liberative healing.

4th limb: *Praṇayama*, Regulation of Vital Energy through Breath

Practice of various *asanas*, provided that they are suitable *asanas* for a particular person, and correctly performed, contributes to regulation of the vital

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[57] Vasant Lad, *Ayurveda, The Science of Self-Healing* (Santa Fe, NM: Lotus Press, 1985) 113.

[58] Lad, *Ayurveda, The Science of Self-Healing*, 115-125.

[59] B.K.S. Iyengar, *Light on Yoga* (NY: Schocken, 1978) 288-306.

[60] "Asana or Posture," *Brahmavadin*, 2:250.

energy, *prana*, and so leads naturally to proper performance of the next stage of Yoga, *pranayama*. Patañjali defines *pranyama* as "the cessation of the motion of inhalation and exhalation" (YS 2.49).[61] The word *prana* is derived from the verbal root √*an*, 'to breathe', while the root √*pra*, means 'to fill'. *Prana* means breath, but more importantly, it means vital energy, spirit, and power. The word *pranayama* is comprised of *prana*, and *ayama*, 'extending' or 'controlling' [√*yam*, 'to reach']. Vivekananda explains that while *prana* is often taken to mean breath, it is actually the energy of the cosmos, and the energy in each body. The motion of the lungs is the most visible manifestation of *prana*, and control of the breath is the most direct means of gaining awareness and control of the *prana* in oneself.[62]

According to Vivekananda, *prana* is the origin of all energy, "the infinite, omnipresent manifesting power of this universe."[63] In the domain of physics, *prana* manifests as forces such as motion, gravitation and magnetism. In the human body, "It is the *prana* manifesting as the actions of the body, as the nerve currents, as thought force."[64] To get hold of the subtle vibration of

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[61] Book Two of the *Hatha Yoga Pradipika* gives instructions for *pranayama*, and Book Three describes the *mudras* or "seals," techniques for harnessing and utilizing prana. Book Four treats *samadhi*, which shows that Hatha Yoga, like classical Yoga, has a soteriological aim, though Hatha is more oriented to body and health.

[62] Swami Vivekananda, "Raja-Yoga" in *Complete Works*, 1:267.

[63] Vivekananda, *Complete Works*, 1:147.

[64] Vivekananda, *Complete Works*, 1:148.

prana in oneself is the means, Vivekananda says, of grasping the whole of *prana* which is the energy source of the whole universe, and into which everything resolves at the end of each cycle of time.[65]

Prana and its manifestation as breath is crucial for inquiry into body and religiousness. The English word spirit derives from the Latin, *spīrare*, "to breathe."[66] The word "spirit" connotes vital breath, as does the Sanskrit *prana*. Like *prana*, "spirit" suggests incorporeality, and the principle which gives life to the body. As the life-principle, and in its connotation of immateriality, spirit is aligned with divine entities and with the sacred. The "spiritual" is the sacred; human "inspiration," the drawing of breath, is the constant sign of our participation in the sacred power of the universe.

In Western concepts of person, "spirit" can mean a mediating force between a person's body and soul. In physiological terms, breath is subject to both voluntary and involuntary control. Breathing prevails in our waking, sleeping, and even unconscious states, yet it may be controlled in its depth, timing, and quality. Yoga identifies breath as an excellent psycho-physiological bridge to gaining control of the movement of the subtle energy, *prana* --the energy funding the mind's activities-- and thus to achievement of Yoga's goal, *citta-vrtti-nirodha*: extermination of the *vrttis*, or "turnings" of the mind.

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[65] Vivekananda, *Complete Works*, 1:149-51.

[66] *OED*, 16:251, s.v. "spirit."

To illustrate the function of *praṇayama*, Vivekananda tells a parable about a king's minister whom the king imprisoned in a high tower. The minister asked his wife to bring to the tower a beetle, some honey, and some silk thread, pack thread, twine, and rope.

> The husband ordered her to attach the silken thread firmly to the beetle, then to smear its horns with a drop of honey, and to set it free on the wall of the tower, with its head pointing upwards. She obeyed all these instructions, and the beetle started on its long journey. Smelling the honey ahead it crept slowly onwards, in the hope of reaching the honey, until at last it reached the top of the tower, when the minister grabbed the beetle and got possession of the silken thread. He told his wife to tie the other end to the pack thread, and after he had drawn up the pack thread, he repeated the process with the stout twine, and lastly with the rope. The rest was easy. The minister descended from the tower by means of the rope, and made his escape. In this body of ours the breath motion is the "silken thread"; by laying hold of and learning to control it we grasp the pack thread of the nerve currents, and from those the stout twine of our thoughts, and lastly the rope of *Praṇa*, controlling which we reach freedom.[67]

In the most basic terms, *praṇayama* involves stopping the breath for some amount of time between inhalation and exhalation. Ordinary breathing is erratic, varying with an individual's mental and physical states. *Praṇayama* serves to steady the mind and nerve currents by controlling the breath, and thus to control the energy of the body-mind system.

> To bring under the influence of the will both the physical and mental conditions by introducing rhythm into them is the method of the exercise of *praṇayama*.[68]

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[67] Vivekananda, *Complete Works*, 1:143-44.

[68] Sinha, "Pranayama," *Brahmavadin* 2:299.

Iyengar explains: "Normally the breath is unrestrained and irregular. Observing these variations, and conditioning the mind to control the inflow, outflow, and retention of the breath in a regular, rhythmic pattern, is *pranayama*."[69] The technique of stilling the breath is called ***kumbhaka***. [***Kumbha*** means jar, a receptacle; the body and particularly the lungs are the receptacle for *prana*]. In *puraka* [√*pur*, 'to fill'], the lungs are filled with air and the breath is held. In *recaka* [√*rik*, 'to empty'], air is exhaled from the lungs and breathing is suspended (TV 2.49).

> *Bahyabhyantara-stambha-vrttir deśakala-samkhyabhih paridrsto dirghasuksmah.*
>
> *Pranayama's* modifications --external [cessation of breath prior to inhalation], internal [cessation of breath prior to inhalation], and restrained [restraint of both of these by a single effort]-- are regulated by place, time and number, and become progressively prolonged and subtle.
> YS 2.50

Puraka is "external" *pranayama*, and *recaka* is "internal." "Restrained" means cessation of both of these "by a single effort" (YBh 2.50). *Pranayama's* "regulation by place" pertains to directing *prana* to particular parts of the body. "Regulation by time" has to do with ratios of time for the three parts of *pranayama*: inhalation, exhalation, and suspension of breath. Various techniques and ratios of inhalation, exhalation and retention of breath constitute the different forms of *pranayama*, and these variations serve different purposes for

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[69] Iyengar, *Light on the Yoga Sutras*, 152.

individual practitioners.[70] Gradually *praṇayama* becomes more "prolonged and subtle" (YS 2.50). Vacaspati explains:

> This *praṇayama* becomes of long duration when it takes up greater space [measured by the effect of the breath outside the body and the sensation of it within the body] and time... It is subtle, because it is known by a very subtle trance (*samadhi*), not because it becomes weak (TV 2.50).

The yogin's acute awareness and command of *praṇa* may progress beyond the external, internal, and restrained forms, to the fourth and highest form of *praṇayama*, by which, Patañjali says, "the covering of light is dissolved" (YS 2.51-52). This covering is "that by which the *sattva* of the thinking substance is covered, in other words, hindrances and evil" (TV 2.52).

Praṇayama purifies the *nadīs* or energy channels of the body, and ultimately helps to purify the mind of its restless activity, confusion, and bondage to matter. I.K. Taimni, in his translation of the *Yoga-sutras*, gives the following simile to convey the effects of one form of *praṇayama*, alternate nostril breathing (*Anuloma Viloma*), on the praṇic currents in the *pranamaya-kośa* or physical body:

> When we breathe normally the pranic currents follow their natural course. When we breathe alternately through the two nostrils their normal flow is disturbed in some way. The effect may be likened to the flow of water in a pipe. When the water is flowing in one direction placidly, silt and other things may be deposited at the bottom and are not disturbed to any marked

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[70] T.V.K. Desikachar, *Religiousness in Yoga, Lectures in Theory and Practice* (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1980) 163-72.

extent by the water. But try to force the water in opposite directions alternately and you at once disturb the deposit, and if the process is continued long enough the pipe gets cleaned ultimately."[71]

Each of the five *praṇas* or vayus, vital airs or forces, is responsible for functions within a particular region of the body:

Udana vayu (rising air):
Operates between throat and top of head, responsible for processes including speech.

Praṇa vayu (vital air):
Operates between throat and navel, controls e.g., respiration and circulation.

Samana vayu (equal air; carries nutriment, etc., equally to all part of body):
Operates between navel and heart; its main responsibility is control of digestion.

Vyana vayu (pervading air):
Operates throughout the whole body, assisting other *vayus*. It controls body movement, gross nerves, and the subtle *nadīs* or energy channels.

Apana vayu (downward air):
Operates from navel to soles of feet; controls excretion, sexual, and reproductive functions.
YBh 3.38

Figure 3: The five *praṇas* or vital airs[72]

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[71] I.K. Taimni, *The Science of Yoga*, 261.

[72] See also Baba Hari Dass, *Ashtanga Yoga Primer* (Santa Cruz, CA: Sri Rama Publishing, 1981) 8-9.

Apana also has the meaning of displaced *praṇa*. When a person is unsteady, confused, or otherwise disturbed, his *praṇa* is not confined within him, but is scattered beyond his body. A yogin, on the other hand, is "one whose *praṇa* is within the body."[73] *Apana praṇa* can also refer to impurities in the body, which can be reduced at the subtle level of praṇic energy by the cleansing force of *praṇayama*. Invoking the *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpika's* image of the center of the body as "the seat-of-fire" (HYP 3.65-66), Desikachar maintains that "defilements" in the body interfere with *praṇa* entering the body. On inhalation, *praṇa* in the air surrounding the body is drawn into the body where it meets the *apana* or impure air. On exhalation, the *apana* moves toward the *praṇa*. The power of respiration, digestion and metabolism in the center of the body is likened to a flame, and the energy of *praṇa* in this region in effect "burns" the defiling *apana* upon inhalation. Equally important is the expulsion of this burnt residue, achieved by exhalation. The diverse patterns of inhalation, exhalation and retention of breath maximize praṇayama's purificatory functions.[74]

In classical Yoga, *praṇayama* demonstrates the soteriological role of the body by its capacity to increase the health and vitality of the body, and to reduce the *citta-vṛttis* or "mind-waves," preparing the *sadhaka* for attainment of the higher states of consciousness in the final three "inner limbs" of Yoga.

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[73] Desikachar, *Religiousness in Yoga*, 135-36.

[74] Desikachar, *Religiousness in Yoga*, 139-43.

Prana is integral to Yoga's understanding of health. Disease can be characterized in terms of disturbance in the balance of *prana* in the body, "So the best way for keeping the body free from disease is by preserving an even circulation of *prana*."[75] *Pranayama's* chief purpose is to gain control of *prana* for the sake of attaining enlightened consciousness. *Pranayama* concentrates *prana* within the body by stilling the mind through regulating the *prana*-carrying breath. Reciprocally, Yogic mental culture produces greater mental clarity, thereby reducing distress, reflected in regulation of the operations of breath and *prana* in the body. Eliade writes that *pranayama* stabilizes physiological unevenness, and is the gateway to a deeper mode of being:

> *Pranayama*, we should say, is an attention directed on one's organic life, a knowledge through action, a calm and lucid entrance into the very essence of life.[76]

5th limb: *Pratyahara*, Withdrawal of the Senses

Pratyahara is the transition between the first four external limbs of Yoga and the final three internal limbs. The word *pratyahara* is comprised of the adjective *prati* meaning 'against', 'return', or 'withdrawal', and *hara*, 'bearing' or 'bringing' [verbal root √*hri*, 'to hold', 'to carry']. A technical term in Yoga, *pratyahara* refers specifically to withdrawal of the senses from their

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[75] Hirendra Nath Sinha,"Pranayama or Control of the Breath," *Brahmavadin* 2:294.

[76] Mircea Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, Willard R. Trask trans. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1958, 1973) 58.

objects. Desikachar suggests a figurative way to interpret the term *pratyahara*: *Āhara* means 'food', so *pratyahara* means "withdrawing from that on which we are feeding."[77]

> *Sva-viṣayāsamprayoge citta-svarupanukara ivendriyaṇaṃ pratyaharaḥ.*
>
> Withdrawal of the senses (*pratyahara*) is that in which the senses, by not contacting their objects, imitate, as it were, the nature of the mind. [As the mind is restrained, so the senses are restrained].
> YS 2.54
>
> *Tataḥ parama vaśyatendriyaṇam.*
>
> Thence is gained ultimate mastery over the senses.
> YS 2.55

The *Yoga-bhasya* explains what is meant by the senses imitating the nature of the mind: "The senses are restrained, like the mind, when the mind is restrained" (YBh 2.54). Though the *Yoga-sutras* treat *pratyahara* in *Sadhana-pada*, the section on practice, *pratyahara* shares with the *antaraṅgas*, or three internal limbs, the characteristic that it arises when necessary conditions are met, rather than being a practice that one can choose to perform, as one can perform *asana* and *pranayama*.

> That which is attempted by *pratyahara* may therefore be said to be the destruction of [the mind's] natural tendencies and the intrinsic desire on its part to rush out and attach itself to objects, and thereby to bring it under the control of higher and spiritual faculties... *Pratyahara* is not therefore the exercise of merely withdrawing the energies working in the senses and centering them in the mind, but of withdrawing the mind from its tendencies to

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[77] Desikachar, *Religiousness in Yoga*, 152.

> join the senses, and bring its faculties of feeling and willing under control."[78]

Pratyahara consists in the senses ceasing their usual function of having contact with objects and transmitting sensory information to the mind. Instead, the mind is fully involved with its object, such as the performance of *praṇayama*, and the usual link between the mind and senses is severed. *Pratyahara*, like the limbs preceding it, utilizes and sublimates the physical body, specifically, the sensory capacities, to prepare for Yoga's higher stages of meditative consciousness.

Cultivation of Consciousness:
The Polarity of Samadhi *and* Vyadhi *(Illness)*

Of the many themes that can be explored regarding yogic meditation and higher consciousness, the present study of yogic religious therapeutics emphasizes the polarity of *samadhi* or higher consciousness, and *vyadhi*, illness. Integration is a pivotal concept in the opposition of *samadhi* (whose nature is *ekagrata*, one-pointed consciousness) and *vyadhi*, which etymologically connotes fragmentation. The word *samadhi* means *putting together* or integrating. It is comprised of the prefix *sam*, 'with' or 'together', and the verbal root √*dha*, 'to put'. *Vyadhi* on the other hand is comprised of the prefix √*vi*, 'out', 'asunder', + √*dha*. Thus *vyadhi* literally means 'to put out': to disconcert or

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[78] Sinha, "Pratyahara or the Gathering of the Senses," *Brahmavadin* 2: 357.

fragment. Illness is a dis-integrating hindrance to spiritual progress because it keeps one oriented to the physical body and contradicts the recovery of primordial Unity, named by Eliade the supreme goal of life in the Indian tradition, and "a dream that has obsessed the human spirit from the beginnings of its history-"[19] Yoga seeks to counteract dis-integration, whose forms include physical illness and mental distress, to help bring about states of higher knowing and being. *Samadhi* is the quintessential form of reintegration --the recovery of Unity. The polarity of integrated higher knowledge and states of disability opens perspectives on meanings of well-being, both psycho-physical and spiritual.

Yoga's final three limbs are called *antaranga*, the "internal limbs" [*antar*, 'inner'; *anga*, 'limb'], as distinguished from the first five "external limbs," *bahiranga* [*bahis*, 'outer'] (YS 3.7). The internal limbs are progressively pure meditative stages. In Yoga's inner limbs, the mind's activity is confined within increasingly focused spheres: first on a particular object of concentration (*dharana*), then with unwavering awareness of the object (dhyana), and finally with awareness of the object, without awareness of one's own mind (*samadhi*). *Dharana*, *dhyana*, and *samadhi* are together called *samyama*, by which one attains *prajña*: higher, liberative knowledge (YS 3.4,5).

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[19] Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, 98-99, 124.

6th limb: *Dharaṇa*, Concentration

Āsana and *praṇayama* are practiced to reduce distractions arising from the body-mind, and *pratyahara* consists in elimination of mental distraction from sensory sources. On the foundation of these preliminary limbs, *dharaṇa* is a further refinement of consciouness undertaken to confine the mind's activity within particular boundaries.

> *Deśa-bandhaś cittasya dharaṇa.*
>
> Concentration (*dharaṇa*) is the confining of the mind to one place, [i.e., to an object of meditation].
> YS 3.1

The word *dharaṇa* is derived from the verbal root √*dhṛ*, meaning 'to hold', 'to support', and refers to holding a chosen object in the mind. Objects that may be chosen for concentration include points in the body, objects such as a *mantra* or sacred utterance, or an image of a deity or revered master (TV 3.1). Concentration on an object in *dharaṇa* is not worship of the object or what it represents; the object merely serves as a single focal point for the mind's complete attention.

Dharaṇa is an *ekagrata*, a "fixing on a single point," but it differs from the *ekagrata* of *samadhi* states, for in *dharaṇa*, one-pointedness serves the purpose of comprehension[80] --highly focused, but nonetheless ordinary subject-object comprehension. *Ekagrata* in the stages of *samadhi* however, evolves

[80] Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, 70.

from one-pointed subject-object comprehension to the meditator's absorption in the object of meditation.

Yoga's wisdom about human nature is evident in its inclusion of *dharaṇa*, for *dharaṇa* provides limited freedom for the mind to consider various aspects of the object of concentration, rather than demanding immediate and complete restriction of the mind's activity. The *sadhaka's* aims in *dharaṇa* are two: to reduce the frequency of her or his mind's wandering from the object of concentration, and to increase the magnitude of her/his alertness and awareness. Vacaspati notes that *dharaṇa*, *dhyana*, and *samadhi* "are related to one another as cause and effect consecutively, and their order of causation is fixed" (TV 3.1). In Iyengar's "Tree of Yoga," *dharaṇa* is the sap of the tree. As sap pervades all parts of the tree, concentration on a chosen object should pervade the yogin's being.[81] In the present context, *integration* is a major factor in healing and liberation, the practice of *dharaṇa* initiates one-pointedness and provides a bridge from non-fragmented awareness at the level of ordinary cognition, to the fully unified consciousness of *samadhi*.

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[81] Iyengar, *Tree of Yoga*, 8, 65.

7th limb: *Dhyana*, Contemplation

While *dharaṇa* is the mind's limiting its attention to a single object of concentration, *dhyana* is the achievement of sustained and unwavering attention to the object.

> *Tatra pratyayaikatanata dhyanam.*
>
> Contemplation (*dhyana*) is the unified flow of the mind in that place, [i.e., the "place" concentrated upon in *dharaṇa*].
> YS 3.2

The transition from *dharaṇa* to *dhyana* is spontaneous, not requiring any new technique, and likewise *samadhi* is attainable without new techniques once *dharaṇa* and *dhyana* are established.[82] While *dhyana* is the state of full attention to the object of concentration, *samadhi* is the mind's total absorption in it. In Iyengar's tree of Yoga, *dhyana* is the flower, preceding the fruit of *samadhi*.[83]

The verbal root of the word *dhyana* is $\sqrt{}$*dhi*, 'to think'. *Dhyana* is not ordinary, discursive thinking, but rather the mind's undiluted one-pointedness. Progression from *dharaṇa* to *dhyana* is represented in the term *pratyaya-eka-tanata*. *Pratyaya* refers to the effort or contents of the mind, and *eka-tanata* means "flowing as one" [*eka*, 'one'; $\sqrt{}$*tan*, 'to stretch'].

> *Dhyana* may be described as that process by which the mind is constantly concentrated on a single object to the exclusion of the others in such a way as to put an end to all internal reactions

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[82] Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, 77.

[83] Iyengar, *Tree of Yoga*, 8-9.

> both from past and present impressions, to completely annihilate the very tendency to undergo manifestations and run into all sorts of forms, to overcome all disturbing memories and thoughts, whether pleasurable or painful, and to be able to work with the single impression of restraint, assuming one form and state, and possessing the sole character of the absorbing thought or memory.[84]

The faculty of mental concentration used in Yogic meditation is necessary to all stages of Yoga, and indeed "...no profession in this world can we succeed in, if we do not develop this power."[85] However, the concentration exercised in *dharaṇa*, *dhyana*, and *samadhi* is a higher form of concentration. Yogic meditation is not of the same order as secular meditation. Eliade is adamant that the experience of Yogic meditation exceeds ordinary meditative experience in purity and density, and further, that *dhyana* permits penetration and assimilation of the inner form of objects. He gives a simplified example of the meditation on fire, which permits the yogin to have insights such as comprehension of the physiochemical process of combustion, identification of this process with the combustion that occurs in the human body, identification of the fire before him with other forms of fire including the sun, cognizance of fire at the plane of the "infinitesimals" that comprise it, recognition of fire as *prakṛti*, mastery of the "inner fire" by *praṇayama*, (and by extension from microcosm of self to macrocosm of world), mastery of the actual coals before him.[86]

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[84] Sinha, "Dhyana or Meditation," *Brahmavadin* 2:373.

[85] Sinha, "Dhyana or Meditation," *Brahmavadin* 2:368.

[86] Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, 72-73.

The passage from *dhyana* to *samadhi* is marked by the dissolution of distinctions between the subject, object and process of meditation. Complete integration of experience arises, and the meditator is aware only of "the new ontological dimension represented by the transformation of the 'object' (the world) into 'knowledge-possession.'"[87] This break to a higher order of knowing and being is the yogin's entry into the stages of *samadhi*.

8th limb: *Samadhi*, Absorption

In *samadhi*, the yogin has consciousness only of the object of meditation, for the mind is "absorbed" in the object and loses awareness of itself:

> *Tadevarthamatra-nirbhasaṃ svarupaśunyam iva samadhiḥ.*
>
> Absorption (*samadhi*) is the same as contemplation (*dhyana*), except that the mind shines with the light of the object alone, and is devoid, as it were, of its own nature.
> YS 3.3

Samadhi is by nature indescribable, and discussion of it here is restricted by the author's limited knowledge. *Samadhi* is commonly associated with other-worldliness, but states of consciousness resembling its lower stages are not as far from our experience as we might assume. Iyengar writes that *samadhi* is glimpsed by a musician engrossed in playing music, or an inventor who makes a discovery in a state of concentration devoid of egoism.[88] However, while the

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[87] Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, 78.

[88] Iyengar, *Light on the Yoga Sutras*, 170.

first stages of *samadhi* involve ordinary (although "absorbed") cognition, the higher stages require prolonged effort, and constitute a "raptus," or rupture of plane, which Eliade says is "a passage from being to knowing" and "finally leads to the fusion of all modalities of being."[89] The term *samadhi* is sometimes translated as "trance," [from the Latin *transīre*, 'to go across'], a term that denotes states of consciousness where one is detached from awareness of sensory stimuli.[90] *Samadhi* is a form of trance, but not all trance is *samadhi*. Hypnotic trance falls in the category of *vikṣipta*: states of mind that are distracted but occasionally steady.[91] *Vikṣipta* is one of the five states of mind listed in *Yoga-bhasya* 1.1: Wandering, forgetful, alternately steady and distracted, one-pointed, and restrained. Hypnotic trance is merely a provisional state of concentration, but the trance of *samadhi* is gained only by one-pointedness. Trance state is characteristic of shamanic practice. However, while shamanic trance is *ecstatic* --a journeying outside oneself to other regions of the cosmos-- "Yoga pursues enstasis, final concentration of the spirit and 'escape' from the cosmos."[92]

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[89] Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, 80, 82.

[90] *OED*, 18:382 s.v. "trance."

[91] Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, 78-79.

[92] Mircea Eliade, *Shamanism, Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*, Willard Trask trans. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1951, 1974) 5, 107, 417.

The *bhasya* on the *Yoga-sutra's* first verse says that Yoga is *samadhi*. After listing the five states of mind the commentator says:

> That however, which in the one-pointed mind, fully shows forth an object existing as such in its most perfect form, removes the afflictions, loosens the bonds of *karma* and thus inclines it toward restraint, is said to be the Cognitive Trance (*samprajñata samadhi*)... When however all the modifications come under restraint, the trance is Ultra-Cognitive (*asamprajñata samadhi*). YBh 1.1

The literal meaning of *samadhi* is "putting together" [*sam*, 'with'; $\sqrt{}$*dha*]. Non-yogic meanings of *samadhi* include 'to join', 'to arrange' and 'to put in order'. *Absorption* is a central connotation of the term *samadhi*: "*Samadhiyante asmin iti samadhiḥ*": Samadhi is that in which all is absorbed.[93] Dasgupta renders *samadhi* as "unifying concentration."[94] Meanings of *samadhi* can be expressed in terms of "integrative consciousness" to signify *samadhi's* integration of mind with object, the state of psychophysical integration that makes *samadhi* possible, and the re-integration of the yogin with *puruṣa*, which is *samadhi's* purpose. *Samadhi* culminates Yoga's eight limbs, but is not itself the culmination of Yoga. *Samadhi* denotes a range of states of higher consciousness necessary for liberation. The following discussion of *samadhi* corresponds with the diagram of the stages of *samadhi* on page 221.[95]

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[93] Hirendra Nath Sinha "Samadhi or Hyper-Conscious State of Existence, *Brahmavadin* 2:392.

[94] Dasgupta, *History of Indian Philosophy*, 1:271.

[95] Diagram is based on the *Yoga-sutras*, *Yoga-bhasya*, *Tattva-vaiśaradī*, and Dasgupta's chapter, "Stages of Samadhi" in *Yoga as Philosophy and Religion* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1924, 1978), 150-58.

SABIJA SAMĀDHI
Samadhi "with seed,"
i.e., with saṃskaras, impressions of experience, productive of mental activity.

Samprajñata Samadhi
Cognitive samadhi; with support (with object of meditation)

4 types of samapatti or "coalescence" of mind with object (1-4):

Samprajñata-**vitarka**: With **reasoning** (tarka).
Cognition of **gross elements** (mahabhutas) of object of meditation.

1 Savitarka: Concentration on gross form of meditation-object with awareness of its name and associated concepts.
2 Nirvitarka: Concentration of gross form of meditation-object without awareness of its name and associated concepts.

Samprajñata-**vicara**: With **discriminative reflection** (vicara).
Cognition of **subtle elements** (tanmatras) of object of meditation.

3 Savicara: With awareness of the subtle elements' qualities.
4 Nivicara: Without awareness of the subtle elements' qualities.

5 Samprajñnata-**ananda**: Cognition of **intelligence** (buddhi), and experience only of **bliss** (ananda) and ego.

6 Samprajñata-**asmita**: Cognition of **materiality** (prakṛti) pure of modifications, and experience only of **ego** (asmita).

Oscillating between stages of samprajñata, and between sabīja (6) & nirbīja (8):

7 **Asamprajñata or Nirodha Samadhi**:

Supra-cogitive samadhi; without support (without object of meditation)

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8 NIRBIJA SAMĀDHI
Samadhi "without seed":
Dharma-megha-samadhi, "Dharma-cloud samadhi"

Figure 4: ***The stages of samadhi***

In the same way that the limbs of Yoga are external and internal, the lower stages of *samadhi* are instrumental to its higher stages (YS 3.7-8).

The lower stage is *sabīja*, "with seed," that is, with viable *saṃskaras*, "impressions," subtle forms of all experiences, which remain in the mind and produce mental activity and bondage. In *sabīja samadhi*, new *saṃskaras* are prevented and existing ones are "kept under control and made invisible to the vivifying impulses from outside."[96] In *nirbīja samadhi* all *saṃskaras* are destroyed, even the *saṃskaras* generated in *sabīja samadhi* (YBh 1.51). *Sabīja samadhi* has two varieties: *samprajñata*, involving cognition applied to objects of meditation (thus called *samadhi* with support), and *asamprajñata samadhi*, which is supra-cognitive and without a supporting object of meditation. Eliade writes that in *samprajñata samadhi*, the yogin

> ...is still conscious of the difference between his own completely purified consciousness and the Self; that is, he is conscious of the difference between *citta* reduced to its luminous mode of being (*sattva*) and *puruṣa*. When this difference disappears, the subject attains *asamprajñata samadhi*, now every *vṛtti* is eliminated, "burned"; nothing remains but the unconscious impresssion (*saṃskara*), and at a certain moment even these imperceptible *saṃskaras* are consumed, whereupon true stasis "without seed" (*nirbīja samadhi*) ensues.[97]

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[96] Sinha, "Samadhi," *Brahmavadin*, 2:413.

[97] Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, 91.

The four types of *samprajñata samadhi*, called *samapattis* or "coalescences" of mind with the object of meditation, correspond to the four states of the *guṇas*: "the particular, the universal, the differentiated, and the undifferentiated" (YS 2.19).

Vitarka: **Viśeṣa** or Particular *guṇa*-state.

Viśeṣa refers to the state of the lower mind that regards objects as distinct from one another and separate from divine consciousness.

Vicara: **Aviśeṣa** or Universal *guṇa*-state.

Aviśeṣa designates the higher mind's power to identify universal categories and principles underlying particulars.

Ānanda: **Liṅga** or Differentiated *guṇa*-state.

Liṅga means a mark which identifies. In the ananda stage, all objects are experienced as part of universal consciousness, yet each remains distinguishable.

Asmita: **Aliṅga** or Undifferentiated *guṇa*-state.

Aliṅga means without mark or differentiating characteristic. In the asmita stage, objects lack distinct identity for the yogin. Consciouness is pure: distinct objects of course exist, but the yogin is aware instead of the whole of *puruṣa*.

Figure 5: The four stages of *samprajñata samadhi*[98]

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[98] Dasgupta, *Yoga as Philosophy and Religion*, 150-53.

Asamprajñata samadhi may arise between the stages of *samprajñata samadhi*, and it oscillates between the final stage of *sabija samadhi* and the dawning of *nirbija samadhi*. *Asamprajñata samadhi* is the *nirodha* stage of *samadhi*, wherein there is no mental activity.

> The mind in this state is in pure vacuity so to say; there are only some of the germs of thought in the form of potencies. The "I" of the mind remains long in this *nirodha* in a state of absolute objectlessness; all the potencies are destroyed, and at last the *citta* is annihilated in the sense that it returns back to *prakrti*, never again to bind *purusa*.[99]

Nirodha means stoppage [√*rudh*, 'to stop', 'to obstruct']. The *nirodha* state is the necessary condition for passage into *nirbija samadhi*, which involves three "transformations" or *parinamas*: *samadhi*, *nirodha*, and *ekagrata*. Transformation to *samadhi* is the cessation of "many-pointedness" and the arising of one-pointedness, *ekagrata*. This first transformation is *samadhi parinama*. Then follows *ekagrata parinama*, where arising and subsiding cognitions are the same. In the third transformation, *nirodha parinama*, the *citta-vrttis* or "mind-waves" are suppressed between the arising and cessation of impressions (YS 3.9-12).

With *nirodha* established, and having thus entered *nirbija samadhi*, the yogin attains the highest *samadhi*: *dharma-megha-samadhi*. *Dharma-megha-samadhi* is sometimes translated as "cloud of virtue," suggesting the pouring forth of rains of goodness, but this is a figurative interpretation. Vacaspati explains *dharma-megha-samadhi* as "the stage when all other thoughts cease to

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[99] S.N. Dasgupta, *Yoga Philosophy in Relation to other Systems of Indian Thought* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1939, 1974) 341.

exist, then he becomes possessed of constant discriminative knowledge" (TV 4.29). The meaning of *dharma-megha-samadhi* is mysterious, but based on Vacaspati's clarification, we might take *dharma* in its meaning of "thing or object" and surmise that the *dharma*-cloud refers to a state wherein external stimuli and internal saṃskaric impulses are nullified for the yogin, and pure consciousness is experienced, similar to the way things are made visible when a thick fog is dispelled. From the discriminative knowledge or *prajña* attained in *dharma-megha-samadhi*, the yogin realizes the distinction of *puruṣa* from *prakṛti*, and is thence liberated, *kevalī*.[100] For the *jīvan-mukta*, the one "liberated in life," the yogin has enlightened understanding of his own consciousness as part of the all-embracing *puruṣa*.

The claim that liberation is healing in Yoga is supported by the polarity of *vyadhi*, illness, and *samadhi*, conceived in terms of its integrative qualities. *Vyadhi*, the disintegrative condition of illness, is the first and foremost of the nine obstacles to the integrated state of *samadhi* (YS 1.30). The word yoga in its sense of "yoking" itself signifies integration; *samadhi*, whose nature and means of attainment is integration --in the form of *ekagrata*, one-pointedness-- is the fruit of Yoga practice and the means to liberation. Yoga seeks to counteract psychophysical disintegration, a basic form of which is ill-health. More significantly, Yoga seeks to remedy the dis-integrated state of the mind,

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[100] Dasgupta, *Yoga as Philosophy and Religion*, 117.

so the yogin becomes re-integrated with the primordial power of consciousness which is his true self-nature.

A number of determinants of psychophysical health are thematic in yogic religious liberation. For example, a chief determinant of health, freedom from pain, warrants the interpretation that the overcoming of suffering resulting from the *kleśas* --afflictions affecting the soul as well as body/mind-- is part of attainment of health in an ultimate, spiritual sense. Self-identity is another determinant of health in its ordinary meaning, and is also integral to yogic liberation. By naming establishment in self-nature as Yoga's aim (YS 1.3), the *Yoga-sutras* at their very outset ground the claim that Yoga permits the realization of health in an ultimate sense. The concept of integration funds the distinction between *samadhi* and *vyadhi*, and in this chapter's final section, "Liberation as Healing in Classical Yoga," my conclusions about the therapeutic elements of Yoga's soteriology are informed by analysis of a web of concepts showing commonalities of holiness and wholeness, and the role of integration as a corollary of wholeness.

LIBERATION AS HEALING IN CLASSICAL YOGA

Body and health are highly significant in Yoga, and Yoga has much to contribute to thought and practice regarding human well-being. But even more important in Yogic religious therapeutics is the notion of liberation as healing: realization of one's ultimate nature as consciousness. Besides the *Yoga-sutras'*

therapeutic paradigm as reconstructed on pages 164, a therapeutic paradigm is explicitly presented in Vyasa's *Yoga-bhasya*. Like medical science, Vyasa says, Yoga has four divisions:

Medical science	Yoga
1. Illness	Cycle of suffering and rebirths (*samsara*)
2. Cause of illness	Cause of *samsara*: ignorance (*avidya*)
3. Recovery of health	Liberation (*moksa*: *kaivalya*)
4. Therapeutic	Discriminative knowledge (*vivekakhyati*)

YBh 2.15

Vyasa's therapeutic paradigm conveys the fundamental meaning of health in Yoga: ultimate well-being consisting in freedom from limitations and suffering, and foundational to this, the unimpaired manifestation of self-identity. In an analysis of the fourfold division of the Yoga-śastra, the Āyurvedic medical science, and the Buddha's Four Noble Truths, Wezler states that the term *arogya*, health, connotes a state of being *restored* to a condition free of disease, presupposing an original state of health.[101] Wezler's point is taken up by Halbfass in his discussion of the nature and limits of the therapeutic paradigm in the Indian tradition. Halbfass suggests that an important bridge between medical and soteriological "health" in the Indian traditions is

> ...an appeal to the idea of a "return" in a non-temporal sense, a rediscovery and retrieval of an identity and an inherent, underlying

[101] A. Wezler, "On the Quadruple Division of the Yogaśastra, the Caturvyuhatva of the Cikitsaśastra and the Four Noble Truths of the Buddha," *Indologica Taurinensia* 12 (1984), 304.

> perfection that has always been there, and that has to be freed from obscuration, confusion, and disturbance.[102]

Halbfass' analysis of Sanskrit terms for health indicates that self-identity is central to a concept of health that bridges medical theory and soteriology. *Svasthya*, abiding in oneself, connotes:

> ..."coinciding with oneself," being in one's true, natural state, free from obstruction; it is a state of health and balance as well as of identity and true self-understanding, "being oneself" in a physical as well as a cognitive sense.[103]

The *Yoga-sutras* begin by stating the aim that self-identity is established by stilling the mind's fluctuations (YS 1.2-3), and the final verse of the *Yoga-sutras* indicates that liberation is precisely the establishment of the *puruṣa's* attainment of self-identity as the power of consciousness (YS.4.34). Halbfass concludes from his analysis of Indian therapeutic paradigms that the medical paradigm reaches the limits of its applicability at the point where liberative knowledge permits transcendence of motivation by suffering and well-being, and replaces it with a "genuinely different, purely cognitive, and, in a sense, 'theoretical' orientation toward reality and identity (i.e., primarily the identity of the knowing subject itself)."[104]

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[102] Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection*, 250.

[103] Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection*, 250.

[104] Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection*, 254.

Halbfass is right to say that in the Indian conception of liberation, metaphysics ultimately transcends medicine,[105] and that the "health" Yoga offers "transcends all merely physical healing."[106] Halbfass' interpretation of the relation of medical and soteriological well-being is consonant with the view of medical healing expressed at the beginning of the *Saṃkhya-karika*, the text providing Yoga's metaphysical foundation. The *Saṃkhya-karika* anticipates the objection that suffering may be removed by means such as medical science with this position: Medicine does not relieve suffering with certainty and finality, "therefore, one should entertain a desire for knowledge of those means, other than these evident means, which finally and completely remove misery" (SKB 1.1). Both Halbfass and Wezler note that in this vein, Yoga's four-part therapeutic paradigm not only identifies the common healing function of Yoga and medical science, but maintains that Yoga offers health of a superior kind.

The meanings we ascribe to the term health depend on our metaphysical conception of the human being. Yoga is committed to regarding the person's true nature as consciousness, while the body, senses and mind are considered to be evolutes of primordial matter, *prakṛti*, the ground of entanglement in materiality, ignorance and suffering. *Puruṣa* is ontically superior to *prakṛti*: *prakṛti* exists so that *puruṣa* may have engagement in experience in order to realize its own nature by discriminating between itself and materiality (YS

[105] Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection*, 256.

[106] Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection*, 248.

2.23). Moreover, liberation is coextensive with the prevailing of *puruṣa over prakṛti*: When a yogin attains liberation, he is no longer subject to the transformations of materiality (YS 4.34).

In classical Yoga, the true Self as consciousness has priority over the psycho-physical self in establishing the meaning of health. We speak of health in reference to the well-being of the body and body-mind, and in ordinary language, the term health is most often associated with physicality, but at its basic conceptual level, health means wholeness. The same determinants characterize Yogic liberation and psycho-physical health, notably wholeness, integration, identity, and freedom. These terms are not understood in their full range of meaning unless applied to the whole of human existence, spiritual and psycho-physical. As regards the person's nature and soteriological potential, health in the psycho-physical domain is subsidiary to the wholeness and well-being that is the Self's abiding in its true nature. Ontologically, this follows from Yoga's standpoint on the preeminence of *puruṣa* over *prakṛti*. Axiologically too, the inherent wholeness and well-being of the spirit is of ultimate value; the body is not only impermanent, but even the greatest physical vitality is irrelevant once the bonds of *prakṛti* are dissolved. Thus in Yoga, the fundamental meaning of health is not psycho-physical well-being, but the well-being of liberated consciousness, a state wherein wholeness, integration, self-identity and freedom obtain, and one is not subject to the vicissitudes of the material world.

Wholeness and Holiness

Etymological analysis corroborates the claim that health and holiness have common ground. The modern English word **holy** descends from the Indo-European root $\sqrt{}$*kailo-*: whole. A descendent of $\sqrt{}$*kailo* is the Old English *hal*, meaning 'whole'. 'Holy' and 'health' are both derived from *hal*.[107] The word **salvation**, derived from the Latin *salus*, meaning both 'healthy' and 'whole', also suggests the idea of healing from the afflictions of the human condition.[108]

In the Indian context, a significant instance of the unity of health and religiousness is expressed in classical Yoga's opposition of *samadhi* to *vyadhi* or illness. Etymological analysis (above on pages 212-13) reveals the polarity of illness (as disintegration) and *samadhi* (as integration). The contrast of *samadhi* and *vyadhi* does not imply that health problems prevent a person from attaining Yoga's religious aim, but rather identifies the poles of a continuum of human experience where realization of ultimate spiritual potential entails integrated form and function, and stands in opposition to the disintegration, impairment, and suffering of illness.

Vyadhi and *samadhi*, divergent in respect of integration, invoke Yoga's meaning of *yoking*, i.e., unifying and integrating. Integration is a concept derivative of the concept of wholeness: to integrate is to make something whole

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[107] *American Heritage Dictionary*, Appendix: Indo-European Roots, 1520, s.v. "kailo-."

[108] *OED*, 14:420, s.v. "salvation."

by bringing its parts into functional relation. Integration in Yoga refers to a state of consciousness integrated in the respect that it manifests pure intelligence, silent and still, without the awareness-fragmenting distractions of the *vṛttis*, or "turnings" of mental activity. The first five limbs of Yoga can help one achieve brief instants of this non-fragmented and integrated concentration in Yoga's 6th limb, *dharaṇa* or concentration. When the state of concentration is sustained, one is in contemplation, *dhyana*. In *Samadhi*, integration of consciousness is complete: The mind's potential activities are wholly integrated in one-pointed meditative "consciousness of consciousness" (YS 3.3, 3.11-12).

"Wholeness" has a range of meanings in the domains of holiness and health. The concept of wholeness has two main applications:

1) *Wholeness* may be used to refer to states of being.

2) *Holism* refers to the epistemic perspective of considering a system or entity as comprised of, and functioning within, integrated and mutually influential sub-systems, rather than as an isolated concatenation of disparate parts.

Wholeness in the context of human health refers to having the fullest posssible use of one's capacities, and connotes a state without injury or impairment. A holistic perspective recognizes the interdependence of factors constituting person and environment, and influencing states of health and illness. Yoga theory and practice is paradigmatic of holistic treatment of the dimensions of the person in its prescription for liberation. The eight limbs of Yoga address human physicality, psychology, morality, and spirituality with practices that counter fragmented functioning within and among these domains. An example is

praṇayama, controlling subtle vital energy by regulating the gross physical action of the breath, practiced to help establish the conditions necessary for meditative consciousness.

What is the sense of "whole" in the context of the holy? The holy is beyond the limitations of the human state and the mundane world. The related term *sacred* descends from the Latin verb *sacrare*, from the Indo-European root √*sak-*, 'to sanctify',[109] and suggests purification and dedication.[110] "Sacred" connotes that which is pure. In Yoga, purity is the determinant of the sacred. Yoga endeavors to increase purity in body and mental life, attitude and action. To the extent that these are pure, the self as consciousness may manifest itself. In medical theory, purity is the conceptual category representing the opposite of pathogenicity. The idea of defilement is ancient, and was operative in human culture long before the 19th century discovery of biological pathogenicity. Purity in the sense of physical asepsis is a primary concern of medical science, and in the domain of religion, purity is a criterion for distinguishing between the sacred and the profane.

According to anthropologist Mary Douglas, if we leave aside pathogenicity and hygiene from the concept of impurity, we uncover the underlying principle of impurity as "matter out of place." This approach,

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[109] *American Heritage Dictionary*, Appendix: Indo-European Roots, 1537, s.v. "sak-."

[110] *OED*, 14:338-39, s.v. "sacred."

Douglas says, "implies two conditions: a set of ordered relations and a controvention of that order."[111] In classical Yoga, the order which impurity contravenes is the proper relation of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*. *Puruṣa* should have contact with *prakṛti* only as is necessary for the discrimination of itself from matter. Purity then, means non-attachment to materiality. *Puruṣa* is pure consciousness, eternally calm, clear, and at peace, whereas *prakṛti* is unconsciousness, ever agitated and in tension. Entanglement in matter is impurity. That which is sacred is pure, in virtue of being undefiled by materiality and ignorance. The sacred in Yoga, in the most elemental terms, is realization of the primordial wholeness of the spiritual self. Because achievement of self-identity is co-extensive with liberation in Yoga, my final direction for investigating liberation as healing in Yoga is examination of identity and freedom in a soteriological context.

Identity and Freedom

Medical health and spiritual health both entail freedom from limitations and suffering, and the manifestation of one's identity. Among Sanskrit's etymological reflections of the shared meanings of healing and religious liberation is the verbal root $\sqrt{}$*muc*, 'to free', the root of the word *mokṣa*, ultimate liberation. *Muc* can also be used in the sense of healing:

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[111] Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger* (NY: Praeger, 1966) 35.

vyadheḥ muc means to free a person from illness, and from accompanying limitations and distress.[112]

Ultimate well-being is freedom from all that obscures one's spiritual Self. The Self does not require healing, for it is intrinsically whole and well, and not subject to sickness and suffering. But healing in the spiritual dimension means clearing away the obstacles that interfere with the thriving of the spiritual Self. The spirituality of healing is also embodied in using the power of the spirit to bring about healing in psychophysical ways.

Freedom in Yoga entails liberation *from* the human condition with its inevitable limitations and suffering, but more than this, liberation *to* a state of spiritual being as pure consciousness, which is one's true identity.[113] Actualized self-identity in the context of psycho-physical health means having the aspects of oneself functioning together so that their integrity is preserved and one can act in ways that support thriving and accomplishing one's goals. Illness, on the other hand, entails interference with physical and/or psychological functioning, and produces symptoms causing temporary or permanent alterations in an organism's structure and function.

The concept of identity is important for adequate understanding of health and wholeness, because a satisfactory account of health should allow for

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[112] V.S. Apte, *English-Sanskrit Dictionary* (New Delhi: Publications India, reprint 1989) 199, s.v. "free."

[113] Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, 4.

differences among persons, and should evaluate health according to both a universal standard of normality, and relative to individual strengths, limitations, and aims. Persons lacking a particular faculty, e.g., vision, or the ability to walk, are considered handicapped relative to a general standard of "wholeness" for human beings. However, with the inclusion of the factor of self-identity, conceived existentially as the situation of being uniquely oneself and not another, each person's functioning may be regarded relative to his or her own potential. On this interpretation, health is not entirely a matter of the absence of impairment, or confirmation to a univeral standard of form and function, but is relative to one's powers to participate in experiences that manifest and sustain one's own nature.

Freedom in the physical domain has both internal and external dimensions. Physical freedom in an outward sense signifies absence of interference to a person's exercise of choice and action. Health is the inward dimension of physical freedom: Health is contingent in part on one's vitality and inner resources to accomplish his or her purposes. Another distinction that helps to unfold the meaning of freedom is that of freedom *to* and freedom *from*. Self-preservation is the central principle in Descartes' philosophy of medicine, which emphasizes preservation of systems of organs and their functional interconnections. Descartes' principle of self-preservation grounds two interdependent forms of freedom: *Freedom to* interpret and pursue fulfillment, and *freedom from* limitations to this pursuit. Medicine and ethics are both

concerned with freedom, for the chief limitations to freedom are physical illness and political restraint.[114]

Psychological freedom, as conceived by Jung, concerns a self with a particular history, memories, knowledge, ideas, emotions, dreams and so on. In Yoga, the self to be healed and liberated is not this psychological self, but the self as a particular *puruṣa* --an instantiation of universal pure consciousness. Self-identity and freedom are integral to Deutsch's analysis of freedom of consciousness. He presents freedom of consciousness in terms of self-mastery and the creative exercise of one's "native and cultivated capacities of intellect and feeling..."

> In short, he or she who does what he or she most essentially is enjoys the greatest freedom; he or she who is able to perform, as it were, his or her own being in relation to reality is free. Creative imagination is thus integral to what it means to achieve personhood. Freedom of consciousness is precisely the state of being a person.[115]

Consciousness as Deutsch conceives it is not equivalent to *puruṣa* as Yoga understands it, pure of materiality. Deutsch conceives personhood in terms of an embodied state where consciousness operates as the power of creativity. In Deutsch's view, freedom of human consciousness depends on manifestation of self-identity through exercise of one's creative power. This reciprocal relation

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[114] Richard B. Carter, *Descartes' Medical Philosophy* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983) 1, 4.

[115] Deutsch, *Creative Being*, 94.

between freedom and identity is corroborated from a different standpoint by yogic soteriology.

The root meaning of *yoga* in its classical articulation is stilling of the mind's activities, and when these have been stilled, one is established in one's fundamental nature. Thus liberation in Yoga is precisely establishment in self-identity. Although attainment of liberation in Yoga results in well-being and non-suffering, Yoga's ultimate goal is realization of a self-identity that permits freedom from attachment to objects of pleasure and pain. Non-attachment in turn results in non-suffering. Well-being and non-suffering are merely benefits of liberation, in the same way that physical health is a valuable result of the physical self-cultivation undertaken to support meditative practice and attainment of liberative knowledge. The ultimate meaning of healing in Yoga is the attainment of identity and freedom; relief of suffering is corollary to this attainment. Relief of suffering and the promoting of well-being are essential attributes of both religion and medicine, and our understanding and practice of medical science and the healing arts can be informed by metaphysical insights gained from Yoga-śastra. An implication for medical theory is that healing, like liberation, involves more than relieving impairment and suffering, it means promoting wholeness, identity and freedom.

While medical healing is concerned primarily with particular ailments of particular persons, the idea of religious health invokes well-being that transcends

the personal. This implication for health in its religious meaning is confirmed in Ravindra's comparison of psychotherapy and yogic therapeutics:

> The healing at issue is not personal. It is not someone's personal neurosis or defect that yoga wishes to cure; it is the human condition that is of interest... The most significant aspect of yoga and the one which distinguishes it from ordinary physio-therapy, is the trancendence of its aim. That which the yogin seeks does not serve his own purposes. In fact as long as he has his own purposes, he cannot be really open to higher purposes. The whole meaning of religious life can be understood as progressive freedom from the hindrances that impede one's availability to the purpose of the supra personal intelligence.[116]

Tillich reaches a consonant conclusion in his discussion of religious therapeutics in Christianity: Human beings require particular kinds of healing by medical and psychological therapeutics, but the *sōtēr*, the healing saviour, offers universal healing, healing needed by all persons, and which leaves no dimension of the person unattended. In classical Yoga's religious therapeutics, health is both intentionally and spontaneously cultivated. Progress on the yogic path entails increasingly greater well-being, first at the psychophysical level, then spiritually, as the psychophysical dimension serves its liberative purpose and is transcended. The following two chapters investigate body, health, and religiousness in Tantra and other world traditions, examining implications --metaphysical, medical, and religious-- of religious therapeutics.

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[116] Ravindra, *Religious Studies* 14: 394, 396.

Chapter 4

BODY, YOGA, AND RELIGIOUS THERAPEUTICS IN TANTRA

Classical Yoga provides an excellent model of religious therapeutics, which has been presented in terms of five general areas: philosophical foundations, soteriology, value theory, physical practice, and cultivation of consciousness. These areas, based on analysis of classical Yoga's eight limbs, provide an initial matrix of religious therapeutics. The idea of religious therapeutics is a useful heuristic for identifying and interpreting relations among healing and religiousness in various traditions. A more comprehensive model can be established through comparative criticism of classical Yoga, and by identifying elements of religious therapeutics in other traditions.

Reconstruction of a heuristic of religious therapeutics proceeds here by the following steps: I have analyzed classical Yoga, examining connections between health and religiousness, and presented the whole system of classical Yoga as a matrix of religious therapeutics. My next step is the examination of yoga in the context of Tantra, with the aim of providing a more comprehensive understanding of yoga and the body within the Indian tradition. Āyurveda supplemented the yogic model of religious therapeutics with a system of medical therapeutics, and now, Tantra suggests *aesthetics* as another dimension of religious therapeutics.

Classical Yoga's foundations and methods are holistic and integrative. They serve many healing-functions, and they offer extensive prescriptions for the attainment of psychophysical health and spiritual health, i.e., liberation. Classical Yoga stands on its own as a philosophical system and a religious tradition, but "yoga," broadly conceived, designates a range of methods and disciplines utilized across Indian traditions. The various yogas give different priority to the role of the body. Haṭha Yoga is the form of yoga that most strongly emphasizes physical health and the soteriological role of the body. But even in Haṭha Yoga, the body is a vehicle for the attainment of spiritual aims. The currents of *prāṇa* or vital energy are directed by means of physical disciplines such as *asana* and *prāṇayama*, but the yogin controls these currents of vital energy for the sake of religious realization. The Haṭha text *Gheraṇḍa Saṃhita* opens with a verse praising Haṭha Yoga as the first rung on the ladder to Raja or classical Yoga. Eliade however, observes that the Haṭha texts' repeated assurances that their physical practices "destroy old age and death... illustrate the real meaning and final orientation of these techniques."[1] In classical Yoga, we have seen that body and health are of instrumental but not ultimate value: The body is utilized to transcend itself for attainment of Yoga's soteriological goal, realization of self as pure consciousness.

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[1] Mircea Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1958, 1973) 230.

In some respects, classical Yoga is conflicted, for its metaphysics contains an unreconciled dualism, and furthermore, while practice of classical Yoga is paradigmatic of mind/body holism, physical nature and mind/body are rejected for self-realization in isolation from material and psychological nature. Classical Yoga disvalues or neglects material nature, the body, the feminine, sexuality, and relationality. These same elements are central in the tantric tradition, whose monistic ontology is not subject to the problems of metaphysical dualism. Not everyone, in fact not many persons are inclined to lead the ascetic life recommended by classical Yoga. Tantra offers another path, which shares classical Yoga's aim of spiritual self-realization, but wherein embodiedness and sacredness remain compatible. I do not seek to establish the superiority of either the classical or the tantric approach to yoga; instead, I seek a more comprehensive understanding of yoga, and directions for making the idea of religious therapeutics a more comprehensive and useful heuristic. Consonant with the Hindu disposition to be tolerent of religious diversity, I inquire into classical and tantric yoga with the stance that different paths can be suitable for persons in different circumstances.

FOUNDATIONS OF TANTRA

Main Features of Tantra

The vedic tradition and the tantric tradition are distinct but inter-related currents of Indian religious culture, and they share as well as diverge in their

constitutions of religious meaning. A major feature of Tantra is its ontological presupposition that the universe, and everything in it, is a manifestation of the one Brahman. Emergent from this principle is a positive attitude toward material nature and the body. The feminine principle is esteemed as the manifestation of the absolute's immanent and dynamic aspect. Tantra gives greater emphasis to religious practice, rather than theoretical knowledge, and seeks liberation through mystical knowledge gained in experience. A prominent feature of tantric practice is the utilization of material nature in order to transcend subjugation to materiality. Tantra regards the body as an instrument to liberation, but more than this, considers the body as part of the sacred creation, and as capable of enlightenment. The word "tantra" literally means "loom" or "that which is woven." Its verbal root is $\sqrt{}$*tan*, 'to stretch', 'to expand'. Thus it carries the meaning of *expansion*: the expansion of being, of knowing, of bliss. Tantra's connotation of *expansion* recalls Wilfred Cantwell Smith's thought about the sacred as something "more." Diane B. Obenchain explains:

> ...religion might be defined generally as giving care to, paying heed to, paying attention to, more *in* human life than meets the eye. What is more in human life is already within us and around us in the world; we are already, in some sense, participating in it. Hence transcendence (more) is also immanence. What we pay attention to or give care to is what is more... *we give it priority in our lives*, we are in *awe* of it:

> it is sacred to us. Insofar as we give priority in human life to what is more in human life than meets the eye, we desire to live and move *with* it, not against it.[2]

Tantra can refer to the vast tantric tradition in general, to particular sub-systems of thought and practice, and to tantric texts. There are many classifications of tantric sub-traditions. Tantra may be Hindu or non-Hindu, i.e., Buddhist or Jain. Five major divisions of Hindu Tantra, based on predomination of particular deities, are the Śakta, Śaiva, Saura, Gaṇapatya, and Vaiṣṇava (and there are other sub-divisions within and besides these). Tantric texts are sometimes called Āgamas, but this term refers more specifically to the Śaiva texts.[3] The Āgama literature is extensive, but is more concerned with religious practice than with philosophical speculation.[4] An anti-ascetic and anti-speculative orientation is characteristic of Tantra. Though Tantra has comprehensive metaphysical foundations, it is mainly concerned with *sadhana*, religious practice. Tanira has philosophical contributions additional to those of

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[2] Diane B. Obenchain, "Spiritual Quests of Twentieth-Century Women: A Theory of Self-Discovery and a Japanese Case Study," in *Self as Person in Asian Theory and Practice*, ed. Roger T. Ames, Thomas P. Kasulis, and Wimal Dissanayake (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993) 127.

[3] S.C. Banerji, *A Brief History of Tantra Literature* (Calcutta: Naya Prokash, 1988) 1-5.

[4] Surendranath Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy*, 5 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955) 5:20.

the six Veda-accepting classical *darśanas*, yet much of tantric philosophy involves modifications of Saṃkhya and Vedanta.[5]

Tantra as a major religious and philosophical movement emerged around the 4th century of the common era, and according to Eliade, "assumed the form of a pan-Indian vogue from the sixth century onward," popular among philosophers and theologians as well as ascetics and yogins, and influential in philosophy, mysticism, ritual, ethics, iconography and literature.[6] The origins of Tantra are not precisely known, but in the pre-vedic Indus Valley civilization, centuries before the common era, the germs of Tantra existed in the worship of the Mother Goddess, and the Mother and Father of the universe.[7] Tantra rejects the caste system and the excluding of females from participation in religious activities. Tantra has long provided a religious domain for persons excluded from the Brahminical system because of caste or gender, as well as for those whose religious ideas and practice diverge from Hindu orthodoxy. Though tantrism is a major current of Indian culture, it has tended to remain on the fringes of society.[8] Tantra has been misunderstood, and maligned, for advocating activities that are traditionally or morally objectionable, and among

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[5] Dasgupta, *History of Indian Philosophy*, 1:71.

[6] Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, 200.

[7] Banerji, *Brief History of Tantra Literature*, 8.

[8] Sudhir Kakar, "Tantra and Tantric Healing" in *Shamans, Mystics and Doctors: A Psychological Inquiry into India and its Healing Traditions* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1982, 1991) 151.

the many sub-traditions of Tantra, some do involve extreme and even bizarre practices. Ritual sexual union (both actual and symbolic) is an aspect of some forms of Tantra. However, to reduce the whole tradition of Tantra to particular sects or rites, or to reject Tantra based on a sensationalized view, would be to misconstrue this vital aspect of Indian philosophy and religion.

Like the vedic tradition, Tantra's foremost concern is spiritual realization, but its approach to the relation of human being, world, and the sacred, aims for trancendence of materiality by integration with it, rather than separation from it. Liberation as conceived in Tantra includes spiritual well-being in this life. S.C. Banerji writes that "tantric philosophy vigorously advocates *jīvanmukti* (liberation in life)."[9] In comparing the "emancipative core" of psychoanlysis and Tantra, Sudhir Kakar writes that in Tantra, liberation is not only the "mystical" freedom from all human conditions, but is "also relevant to the individual's concrete historical conditions."[10] The present discussion examines some salient features of Tantra, at points referring to views of particular sub-traditions, but without intending them to be representative of the whole tantric tradition. Owing to the complex and mystical nature of Tantra, and the exploratory nature of the present study, it can be only an initial step in comparative inquiry into religious therapeutics.

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[9] Banerji, *Brief History of Tantra Literature*, 25.

[10] Kakar, *Shamans, Mystics and Doctors*, 154.

Tantric Metaphysics and Soteriology

Tantra's soteriological goal is the realization of the unity of the individual's soul or *jīva* with the the one Supreme Reality, *Param Śiva*, which has the static and transcendent aspect *Śiva*, and the dynamic and immanent aspect *Śakti*. *Śiva* is pure Being, of the nature of consciousness, and *Śakti* is the power that activates and manifests *Śiva*: "The universe is a manifestation of the immanent aspect of the *Parama Śiva* in the form of *Śakti*."[11] While *Śiva* is Being, *Śakti* is the *operative* form of Being, called in the *Yoginīhṛdaya*: "the creative matrix" (*sṛṣtirupa*).[12] The feminine *Śakti* and the masculine *Śiva* are one, as water and its current are one. A person could object to this analogy and the tantric ontology it illustrates, saying that the current is not essential to the water, but is a property of the water, or that the water needn't have a current, for it could be motionless. Tantra would reply that *Śakti* is the force of every manifestation of *Śiva*: roiling, trickling or completely still, *Śakti* is the force responsible for the water's state. The word *śakti* literally means power or energy [√*śak*, 'to be able']. *Śiva* derives from the verbal root √*śī*, 'to lie', and means "that in which all lies," as well as meaning kind, gracious, and the like.

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[11] Manoranjan Basu, *Fundamentals of the Philosophy of Tantras* (Calcutta: Mira Basu Publishers, 1986) 136.

[12] Lalan Prasad Singh, *Tantra, its Mystic and Scientific Basis* (Delhi: Concept Publishing, 1976) 116 n12.

The *Mahanirvana Tantra* begins with Parvatī (*Śakti*) the spouse of *Śiva*, asking him, "What will lead to the benefit of the universe?" *Śiva* replies by conveying the nature of *Brahman*, the worship of whom leads to liberation.

> O Parameśvarī! should good be done to the universe, the Lord of the universe is pleased, since he is its Self, and it depends on him. He is One. He ever is. He is the truth. He is supreme unity without a second. He is ever-full and self-manifest. He is eternal consciousness and bliss...[13]

About her own nature, Parvatī hears from *Śiva*:

> Thou art the very *Para Prakṛti* (supreme matter) of *Brahman* the *Paramatman* (supreme consciousness) and from thee has sprung the whole universe --O Śiva-- its Mother. O gracious one, whatever is in this world, of things that have and are without motion, from *Mahat* (the Great) to an atom, owes its origin to and is dependent on thee.... Thou art both subtle and gross, manifested and veiled, though in Thyself formless, yet thou hast form...[14]

Tantric metaphysics includes *prakṛti* and *puruṣa*, but they are understood differently from the way Saṃkhya-Yoga understands them. Saṃkhya-Yoga faces the general quandary of dualistic ontologies, that of explaining how two entities --of wholly distinct natures-- can interact. According to Saṃkhya, *puruṣa* is pure consciousness, and *prakṛti* is unconscious matter. There are many *puruṣas*; each person is an individual *puruṣa*. Tantra however, like Vedanta, accepts

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[13] *Mahanirvaṇa Tantra* 1:33-34 (*The Great Liberation)*, trans. Arthur Avalon (Madras: Ganesh and Co., 1913, 1953) 25-26.

[14] *Mahanirvaṇa Tantra* 4:10-11,15 (*Great Liberation*), 65-67.

Brahman as the one real. According to Tantra, both the individual *puruṣa*, and *prakṛti* or material mature, are identical with *Brahman*. While Saṃkhya holds that creation proceeds from the co-presence of *prakṛti* (matter) and *puruṣa* (consciousness), in Tantra, both *prakṛti* and *puruṣa* exist within the supreme *Brahman*. Like Vedanta, Tantra considers creation to proceed from *līla*, the sportive play of *Brahman*. Thus for Tantra, *prakṛti* is not distinct from *Brahman*, nor is *prakṛti* unconscious (*jaḍa*) as it is for Saṃkhya. As part of *Brahman*, *prakṛti* is conscious, and by means of *prakṛti*, *Brahman* manifests itself in the form of all the constituents of the manifest universe.[15] Tantra's metaphysical presupposition that matter possesses consciousness is crucial: The Saṃkhya-based classical Yoga assumes that matter is unconscious, and aims for realization of self as not-matter, while tantric yoga utilizes the body as an instrument of liberation, and reveres its material nature as conscious and as sacred.

While tantric metaphysics is non-dualistic (*advaitin*), and regards *Brahman*, known as *Param Śiva*, as the one Reality, it allows for the apparent difference of the one Absolute and the multifarious manifest world. *Śiva* and *Śakti* are separable in empirical and cognitive analysis, but their identity is knowable through higher knowledge offered by tantric mysticism.[16] Tantra is

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[15] Banerji, *Brief History of Tantra Literature*, 122-23.

[16] Singh, *Tantra, its Mystic and Scientific Basis*, 128.

monistic like Vedanta, rather than dualistic like Saṃkhya, but while Vedanta ultimately relegates the manifest world to the status of *maya* or illusion, Tantra considers the manifest world as fully real. Vedanta regards *maya* as "that power (*śakti*) of Brahman by which the world of multiplicity comes into existence."[17] Tantra shares this interpretation, but not Advaita Vedanta's understanding of *maya* as the illusory ground and nature of subject-object distinctions.

> What is meant by calling the world an illusion and at the same time ascribing existence to it? The answer is that for Advaita Vedanta the term "real" means that which is permanent, eternal, infinite, that which is *trikalabadhyam*, never subrated at any time by another experience-- and *Brahman* alone fits this meaning. The world is not real, but it is not wholly unreal.[18]

For Tantra however, material nature (including the embodied human being) as a manifestation of *Śiva-Śakti*, has full reality, and is sacred in its origin and fundamental nature. The human being as an aspect of creation is not-different from *Param Śiva*; this ontological position contributes to a more body-positive religious practice and soteriological goal than is found in orthodox Hinduism.

Tantra's monistic view of the world and *Brahman* (as *Śiva-Śakti*) is free of the problems confronted by the dualism of Saṃkhya-Yoga. Further, even

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[17] Eliot Deutsch, *Advaita Vedanta, A Philosophical Reconstruction* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press, 1969, 1980) 30.

[18] Deutsch, *Advaita Vedanta*, 32.

though Tantra is monistic, it is able, unlike Advaita Vedanta, to preserve the particularity of entities. Rather than ascribing to particular entities a lower ontological status as mere appearances of *Brahman* (a consequence of Advaita Vedanta's understanding *of maya*) tantric metaphysics does not consider particular entities in the manifest world to be less real than *Brahman*. For those who are concerned about provision for particularity, as is the case where body is considered integral to personhood, tantric metaphysics makes an important contribution. According to Tantra, not just the person's consciousness, but consciousness and the pyschophysical complex together are *Brahman*. The body is the person's locus in space, and has a particular position and nature, with no less reality than the person's non-material apsects.

Reverence toward the beings and things of the world does not imply attachment and indulgence. Rather, Tantra considers recognition of the unity and sanctity of material nature as an antidote to attachment, for attachment requires a sense of duality: "I can be attached to something which I consider different from or other to me." By realizing that I am one with all, "there is no question of attachment with what is already myself or my own."[19] Eliade expresses the core of tantric metaphysics and soteriology as follows:

> ...the absolute reality, the *Urgrund*, contains in itself all dualities and polarities, but reunited, reintegrated, in a state of absolute Unity

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[19] Kamalakar Mishra, *Significance of the Tantric Tradition* (Varanasi: Arddhanarīśvara Publications, 1981) 44.

> (*advaya*). The creation, and the becoming that arose from it, represent the shattering of the primordial unity and the separation of the two principles (*Śiva-Śakti*, etc.); in consequence, man experiences a state of duality (object-subject, etc.) --and this is suffering, illusion, "bondage." The purpose of tantric *sadhana* is the reunion of the two polar principles within the disciple's own body.[20]

Consonant with other Indian traditions, Tantra holds that liberation depends on self-knowledge. The individual, or *jīva*, is *Śiva*, and tantric *sadhana* serves the purpose of gaining self-knowledge: *atma-pratyabhijña*. Mishra names *pratyabhijña* ("recognition") as the central problem of the tantric tradition of Kaśmīra Śaivism, and notes that this school is in agreement with Advaita Vedanta on the point that self is known not as an object, in a dualistic subject-object way, but is known as a self-illumined or *svayamprakaśa* subject.[21] Self-realization in Tantra is considered to afford both ultimate liberation and enjoyment in the present life.[22] Saṃkhya and classical Yoga envision liberation as realization of self-nature as pure consciousness, without suffering, but without bliss. Tantra, however, like Vedanta, conceives the liberated state as one of Being, consciousness and bliss. Now a look at tantric conceptions of body, yoga, and how tantric *sadhana* serves the end of liberative self-knowledge.

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[20] Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, 206.

[21] Mishra, *Significance of the Tantric Tradition*, 22-24, 32.

[22] Singh, *Tantra, its Mystic and Scientific Basis*, 43.

THE BODY AND TĀNTRIC YOGAS

Kuṇḍalinī Yoga

Yoga's universality shines beautifully in its many forms throughout countless Indian schools and sects, Hindu and non-Hindu, vedic and tantric. The incorporation of yoga-practices in a range of Indian religious traditions, and yoga's thriving in the world beyond India, attest to the broad applicability of its methods. There is no pure Veda-based yoga nor pure Tantra-based yoga. Though Patañjali's classical Yoga is one of the six *astika* or Veda-accepting *darśanas*, it contains elements of tantric yoga, a main characteristic of which is the cosmic physiology of the *cakras* and *naḍīs*, or centers and channels of energy in the psychophysical organism. Although classical Yoga sees the body in terms of Saṃkhya's five elements, and Āyurveda's three *dhatus* or supports, the texts of classical Yoga contain references to the subtle physiology central in Tantra. For example, in the *Tattva-vaiśaradi*, Vacaspati discusses meditation on "the lotus of the heart" between the chest and abdomen, and refers to the *suṣumṇa*, the main energy-channel leading to the highest *cakra* (TV 1.36). The *Yoga-sutras*' mystical aspect is evident in Section 3, *Vibhuti-pada*, the section on extraordinary powers. An example is knowledge of the systems of the body attainable by *saṃyama*, meditative concentration, on the navel-*cakra* (YS 3.30).

Tantra incorporates and adapts the various yogas of the yoga Upaniṣads, which preceded Patañjali's *Yoga-sutras*. The approximately 20 yoga Upaniṣads present a range of yoga practices, including the classical elements of ethical

restraints and commitments, postures, *praṇayama*, sense-withdrawal, and meditation leading to *samadhi*; but unlike classical Yoga, the yoga Upaniṣads emphasize the subtle physiology of *cakras* and *naḍīs*. The yoga Upaniṣads in general assume *Brahman* as the one real, and take yoga's goal to be the realization of *Brahman*.[23] Dasgupta finds that tantric and other modes of worship were influenced by the yoga Upaniṣads, and that some yoga practices were developed in accordance with tantric Śaiva and Śakta doctrines.[24]

Tantra maintains that there can be cooperation rather than opposition between enjoyment in the world (*bhukti*) and the the way of liberation (*mukti*): "Tantra is a meeting ground of *bhoga* (enjoyment) and *yoga*."[25] While classical yoga aims to "burn up" the *saṃskaras* or seed-potentials of action, Tantra's approach is the maturation (*paripaka*) of seed-desires by exhausting them through their fruition. Mishra criticizes classical Yoga's concept of "burning" the *saṃskaras*. While actual seeds can be burnt, Mishra says, the analogy breaks down when applied to human desires: Human desires are part of the Lord's sportive creation of the world, *līla*, and their actualization into worldly activity

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[23] *The Yoga-Upaniṣads*, trans. T.R. Śrīnivasa Ayyaṅgar (Madras: Adyar Press, 1938).

[24] Dasgupta, *History of Indian Philosophy*, 1:228-29.

[25] Singh, *Tantra, its Mystic and Scientific Basis*, 137.

is an aspect of the fulfillment of the Lord's creation.[26] Like classical Yoga, Tantra holds that attachment and aversion, not worldly objects themselves, produce bondage and suffering. The tantric solution is neither indulgence nor eradication of desire, but enjoyment without attachment. Tantra advises against repression of inclinations, recommending that one *witness* one's thoughts and desires, and not suppress them, thus granting the mind opportunity to sublimate thoughts and desires by integrating them, rather than eradicating them.[27]

The aim of tantric yoga is the realization of *Param Śiva*. Fundamental to tantric *sadhana* is Kuṇḍalinī Yoga, a form of Laya Yoga.[28] Laya Yoga incorporates the system of the *cakras* and *kuṇḍalinī* energy.[29] *Laya*, from the verbal root $\sqrt{l\bar{i}}$, 'to dissolve', means the yoga of dissolution, i.e, the dissolution of self into *Brahman*. Dissolution is explainable in terms of the Saṃkhya elements:

> In the tantric form of Laya Yoga or in *ṣatcakrabheda*, the five gross constitutional elements (*pañca mahabhuta*) of both body and universe dissolve in their source. It means during the process of yoga, the earth element dissolves into water, water into fire, fire into air, and air into

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[26] Mishra, *Significance of the Tantric Tradition*, 47-48.

[27] Pragna R. Shah, *Tantra, its Therapeutic Aspect* (Calcutta: Punthi Pustak, 1987) 3, 30.

[28] Basu, *Fundamentals of the Philosophy of Tantras*, 80.

[29] Arthur Avalon (Sir John Woodroffe) *The Serpent Power* (*Ṣaṭ-cakra-nirupaṇa* and *Paduka-pañcaka*) (Madras: Ganesh and Co., 1918, 1964) 222.

> *akaśa* (space). And this *akaśa* element further dissolves into their essence like sound, touch, form, taste, and smell which merge again into intelligence (*buddhi*), egoism (*ahamkar*), etc., and ultimately into the spirit or consciousness.[30]

Dissolution into Brahman is sought by means of yogic practices that permit the union within oneself of *Śiva-Śakti*. *Kuṇḍalinī*, from *kuṇḍala*, 'coil', refers to the energy or *śakti* of the universe in the form it takes within the human organism, conceived as a small snake coiled at the base of the spinal column. Activating and directing this cosmic energy within oneself is at the root of Tantra and of Kuṇḍalinī Yoga. Kuṇḍalinī Yoga may be called the yoga of energy; its concern is cultivating the ascent of one's vital cosmic energy so that the *kuṇḍalinī* which is *Para-Śakti*[31] may pierce through the several energy centers or *cakras* (literally, 'wheels'), and unite with *Śiva* who resides in the highest *cakra*, at and above the top of the head.

> The devī who is *Śuddha-sattva* pierces the three *liṅgas* [within the *cakras*], and having reached all the lotuses [*cakras*] which are known as *Brahma-nāḍī* lotuses, shines therein in the fullness of her luster. Thereafter in her subtle state, lustrous like lightning and fine like the lotus fibre, she goes to the flame-like *Śiva*, the Supreme bliss and, of a sudden, produces the bliss of liberation.[32]

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[30] Shah, *Tantra, its Therapeutic Aspect*, 80.

[31] *Tantraloka* 2; cited in Singh, *Tantra, its Mystic and Scientific Basis*, 65.

[32] *Ṣat-cakra-nirupaṇa* 51 (*Serpent Power*), 460.

Based on Saṃkhya's metaphysical scheme of the five basic elements that constitute the cosmos and the human organism, Tantra holds that the *cakras* are subtle essences or *tanmatras* of these elements existing within functional loci of the body. The *Ṣaṭ-cakra-nirupaṇa* describes the six *cakras* with their associated colors, deities, seed-sounds (*bīja-mantra*) and other characteristics.[33]

Cakra		Location	Element	Seed-sound
1	*Muladhara*	between anus and genitals	Earth	*laṃ*
2	*Svadhiṣṭhana*	at root of genitals	Water	*vaṃ*
3	*Maṇipura*	navel	Fire	*raṃ*
4	*Anahata*	heart	Air	*yaṃ*
5	*Viśuddha*	throat	Space	*haṃ*
6	*Ājña*	between eyes	*Mahat* (the Great, includes all elements)	*Om*
[Additional to the six, because it is partly within body, and partly beyond it]:				
7	*Sahasrara*	top of and above head		visarga (a release of breath)

Figure 6: The six *cakras*

The *naḍīs* or channels that carry the body's energy are 72,000 in number according to Tantra. The most important of them is the *susumna*, which is parallel with the spinal column and leads to the highest *cakra*.

[33] See also Harish Johari, *Chakras, Energy Centers of Transformation* (Rochester, VT: Destiny Books, 1987).

The two other main *nadis* are the *ida*, to *susumna's* right, and the *pingala* to its left.[34] The ascent of *kundalini* is stimulated by yogic practices such as *asana* or postures, *kumbhaka* or retention of breath, *bandhas* or "locks" [√*bandh*, 'to bind'], wherein regions of the body are contracted to concentrate energy there, and *mudras* or ritual gestures which permit manipulation of cosmic energy within the body. Woodroffe explains that these practices "rouse *kundalini*, so that the *prana* withdrawn from *ida* and *pingala* may by the power of its *śakti*, after entry into the *susumna* or void (*śunya*), go upwards towards the *Brahma-randhra* [the opening of the *susumna-nadi* at the crown of the head]."[35] The commentary on the *Sat-cakra-nirupana* provides some sense of how this occurs:

> The yogin should sit in proper posture... and steady his mind by the *khechari mudra*. He should next fill the interior of his body with air and hold it in with *kumbhaka*, and contract the heart. By doing so the escape of upward breath is stopped... he should contract the anus and stop the downward air... by so doing the fire of *kama-vayu* there is kindled, and the *kundalini* get heated (excited) thereby...[36]

The text describes *kundalini's* ascent and piercing of the *cakras*. Finally she "drinks the excellent nectar issuing from *Para Śiva*." She then returns to her

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[34] *Sat-cakra-nirupana* 1 (*Serpent Power*), 320-23.

[35] Woodroffe, *The Serpent Power*, 228.

[36] *Sat-cakra-nirupana*, commentary on verse 1 (*Serpent Power*), 459.

place in the *muladhara* or root *cakra*: "As she returns she infuses *rasa* (the "sap" of life) into the various things she had previously absorbed into herself when going upward."[37] *Samadhi* in Tantra is this mystical union of *Śiva* and *Śakti*. Kuṇḍalinī Yoga's conception of *samadhi* is very different from that of classical Yoga, for on the tantric interpretation, rather than achieving independence from the body as classical yoga intends, the body itself participates in enlightenment and liberation.

The Role of Body in Tantra

A main tenet of tantric practice or *sadhana* is that "the Absolute is to be realized in and through the human body."[38] The universe is *Śiva's* manifestation, and the human body is *Śiva's* abode. The body is the quintessence of the physio-conscious creation, and the tantric practitioner or *sadhaka* awakens the divinity within him- or herself with the orientation expressed in the *Ratnasara Tantra* that "One who realizes the truth of the body can then come to know the truth of the universe."[39] Eliade writes that in tantrism, the body assumes an importance unparalleled in the Indian tradition:

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[37] *Saṭ-cakra-nirupaṇa*, verse 53 and commentary (*Serpent Power*), 474-75.

[38] Singh, *Tantra, its Mystic and Scientific Basis*, 140.

[39] Cited in Shah, *Tantra, its Therapeutic Aspect*, 12.

> To be sure, health and strength, interest in a physiology homologizable with the cosmos and implicitly sanctified, are vedic, if not pre-vedic, values. But tantrism carries to its furthest consequences the conception that sanctity can be realized only in a "divine body." The upaniṣadic and post-upaniṣadic pessimism and asceticism are swept away. The body is no longer the source of pain, but the most reliable and effective instrument at man's disposal for "conquering death."[40]

Eliade distinguishes two convergent orientations in Tantra's valuation of the body: 1) Emphasis on *the total experience of life* as integral to tantric *sadhana*, and 2) The will to master and transmute the body into a divine body, a strong theme in Haṭha Yoga.[41] Central to Tantra is the polarity of macrocosm and microcosm, wherein the human body is realized, through the interiorization of ritual, as a microcosm of the universe. The language of "macrocosm/microcosm" conveys Tantra's metaphysical orientation, but only in practice can one grasp the meaning of realizing oneself, in body and consciousness, as being part of a whole seamless conscious creation. Though writers on Tantra use the terminology of macrocosm/microcosm, it would be more consonant with tantric metaphysics to speak in terms of correspondence throughout the domains of being. Tantric unity of self and cosmos is a variant, Eliade says, of vedic macranthropy. The *Atharva-veda* for instance, identifies the breaths with the cosmic winds.[42] The *Upaniṣads* contain references

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[40] Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, 227.

[41] Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, 228.

[42] *Atharvaveda*, 11:4.15.

to the identification of the breath with the cardinal directions.[43] While air "weaves the universe,"[44] breath "weaves" the human being.[45] The spinal column is equated with the world-axis Mount Meru in the tantric text *Dohakoṣa*. The *iḍa-nadī* and *piṅgala-nadī* (corresponding with the two principle breaths *praṇa* and *apana)* are called sun and moon, symbolizing their respective strong and gentle natures.[46] Tantric practice or *sadhana* utilizes cosmo-physiology to transubstantiate the human being, to sanctify man by practices that "dilate" or "cosmicize" the physical body so the practitioner realizes himself as literally one with the Absolute which forms the whole of nature, physical and conscious.

Purity --physical and religious-- is a serious concern in Hinduism, and Tantra reassesses the meaning of impurity, and traditional associations between physical impurity and unholiness. A significant example is that Tantra rejects the notion that the touch of a low-caste person would make something impure. The equating of physical impurity with religious impurity is rejected as well; for instance, body fluids are considered by Tantra as physically unclean, but not unholy.[47] Tantra operates on the principle that all aspects of the world, and particularly those of the human psycho-physical complex, are to be accepted and

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[43] *Chandogya Upaniṣad*, 3:13.1-6.

[44] *Bṛhadaraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 3:7.2.

[45] *Atharvaveda*, 10:2.13.

[46] Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, 235-36, 239-40.

[47] Mishra, *Significance of the Tantric Tradition*, 63-64.

sublimated.[48] The word "sublimate" derives from the Latin *sublīmare* 'to raise', [*sublīmus*, 'uplifted', 'sublime'].[49] In the tantric context, *sublimate* pertains to raising the cruder physical level of being to its real status as divine. Renunciation in Tantra does not mean asceticism, but "proper utilization of an object."[50] Contemporary Indian scholars and practitioners of Tantra acknowledge that Tantra is subject to criticism because of the actions of "hypocrites and pseudo-tantrists," who "actually worship their own ego and gratify their senses and do nothing else."[51] Here I'd like to put into perspective some themes connected with Tantra's view of proper utilization of the sex-force for spiritual attainment.

Sexuality in Tantra

Kakar identifies in Tantra "a recognition, even a celebration of man's sensuous nature."[52] This remark should not be taken to mean that Tantra

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[48] Shah, *Tantra, its Therapeutic Aspect*, 79.

[49] *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd edition, 20 vols. Prepared by J.A. Simpson and E.S.C. Weiner (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989) s.v. "sublimate."

[50] Singh, *Tantra, its Mystic and Scientific Basis*, 140.

[51] Mishra, *Significance of the Tantric Tradition*, 77.

[52] Kakar, *Shamans, Mystics and Doctors*, 154.

advocates sensual and sexual indulgence, but rather that in the Indian tradition, and even among world religious traditions, Tantra distinguishes itself by its reverence for the body and emphasis on the religious role of physicality. Cosmic energy, *Śakti*, takes the form of *kuṇḍalinī* energy in the human body, and sexual energy is among its dominant forms. In the physical enjoyment of sex, this energy is directed downwards from the *svadhiṣṭana cakra*; but directing this energy upwards through the *cakras* to the highest one, *sahasrara cakra*, where union of *Śakti* and *Śiva* takes place, is a divinization of human vital energy.[53] A main reason for Tantra's being misunderstood is its use of a symbolic vocabulary incorporating, though not limited to, erotic images. Sexual symbolism is employed in Tantra, but references to e.g., the divine coition of *Śiva* and *Śakti* pertain to the polar aspects of reality, and are not meant in gross anatomical terms.[54]

Tantra has been maligned for the "Five *Makaras*" (5 things that begin with the letter *m*): ritual use of wine (*madya*), meat (*maṃsa*), fish (*matsya*), *mudra*, a kind of parched grain (sometimes translated in its meaning of ritual

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[53] Mishra, *Significance of the Tantric Tradition*, 62.

[54] Shah, *Tantra, its Therapeutic Aspect*, 15.

gesture), and sexual intercourse (*maithuna*). These elements are not necessary features of tantric practice, but when employed, Tantra requires that they be utilized within the context of worship, without excess, and after purification.[55] As regards ritual sexual union, even among those sects which employ it, some practice it symbolically only. Where ritual sexual union is practiced, its quality is that of tantric *sadhana* in general: immobilization. In tantric *sadhana's* goal of immobility on the three planes of thought, breath, and seminal emission, "there is imitation of a divine model --the Buddha, or *Śiva*, pure Spirit, motionless and serene amid the cosmic play."[56] In classical Yoga, *puruṣa* is the quiescent Seer, and all creative activity issues from *prakṛti*. Similarly in Tantra, the male aspect is passive, and the female aspect *Śakti* produces all activity. Eliade remarks on tantric yoga's paradoxical arresting of manifestation and disintegration by going "against the current" (*ujana sadhana*) to recover primordial Unity:

> The paradoxical act takes place on several planes at once: through the union of *Śakti* (= *kuṇḍalinī*) with *Śiva* in the *saharara*, the yogin brings about inversion of the cosmic process, regression to the undiscriminated state of the original Totality; "physiologically," the conjunction sun-moon is represented by the "union" of the *praṇa* and *apana* --that is, by a totalization of the breaths; in

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[55] Sir John Woodroffe, *Introduction to Tantra Shastra* (Madras: Ganesh and Co., 1913, 1952), 112-13.

[56] Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, 259.

> short, by their arrest; finally, sexual union, through the action of the *vajrolīmudra*, realizes the "return of semen."[57]

Maithuna or ritual intercourse can serve as a support for *praṇayama* and *dharaṇa*, by regulation of respiration and concentration. The goal is the very opposite of sensual enjoyment, and seminal emission is prohibited.[58] Sensuality can be a vehicle that "produces the maximum tension that abolishes normal consciousness and inaugurates the nirvaṇic state, *samarasa*, the paradoxical experience of unity."[59] An alternate tantric tradition (perhaps the oldest one, according to Banerji) permits seminal emission, "like the offering of sacred oil poured into an altar of fire."[60]

As regards non-ritual sexuality in the context of spiritual life, Mishra indicates that two main qualities are to be cultivated: an attitude of reverence towards sex, and genuine love of one's partner. The *Kularṇava Tantra* says that the sex-act is to be done in the spirit of worship, not for *bhoga* or enjoyment.[61] Sex as given in nature is *bhoga*, but its utilization as a form of

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[57] Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, 270-71.

[58] *Kularṇava Tantra* 10:6, cited in Mishra, *Significance of the Tantric Tradition*, 65-66.

[59] Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, 267-68.

[60] Banerji, *Brief History of Tantra Literature*, 18.

[61] *Kularṇava Tantra* 10:5; cited in Mishra, *Significance of the Tantric Tradition*, 65-66, 69.

sadhana requires its sublimation within a greater spiritual domain. The sanctity of sexuality is warranted in the Indian tradition apart from Tantra. In the *Upaniṣads* one of the manifestations of Brahman "as food" (i.e., as the outermost sheath of the "five bodies," the one supported by food) is the immortality and bliss in the generative organ.[62] Other *Upaniṣads* refer to the sexual act in terms of a ritual offering.[63] In the *Bhagavadgīta*, Lord Kṛṣṇa refers to himself as Kandarpa, the deity of desire who empowers procreation.[64] Loving one's partner has the ethical dimension of concern for her or his well-being, and the religious dimension of experiencing unity with that person. The partner makes possible the instantiation of a cosmic polarity wherein non-duality may be realized. Tantra's views of sexuality exemplify the tantric leitmotif of using material nature to sublimate that which appears base, and to transform nature so as to reveal its inherent sanctity as part of the sacred body of the Absolute. Mishra writes that sex has become mechanical and insipid in contemporary free-sex society, and that the remedy, from a tantric standpoint, is cultivation of love, grounded in religiousness.[65]

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[62] *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, 3:10.2-3.

[63] *Bṛhadaraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 6:2.13; *Chandogya Upaniṣad*, 5:8.1-2.

[64] *Bhagavadgīta*, 10:28.

[65] Mishra, *Significance of the Tantric Tradition*, 68-71.

Tantra's valuing of the feminine is a characteristic that sets it apart from much of the Hindu tradition. In Tantra's metaphysical foundations, the feminine and the masculine are poles of the *Śiva-Śakti* unity, and in practice women are eligible both to receive and to confer initiation into a religious order. The *Yoginī Tantra*, and the contemporary text *Tantratattva*, highly recommend initiation by a woman guru.[66] The tantric guru of Śri Ramakṛṣṇa was a woman, Yogeshwari. Despite its commitment to the polarity and co-operation of the masculine and the feminine, Kakar notes that Tantra's texts proceed from the viewpoint of male practitioners, and he suggests that Tantra has "greater resonance for the male psyche and physiology."[67] Other sources indicate that in practice males dominate in tantric religious practice and leadership, though the *Śakta* groups actually extend full privileges to females.[68]

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[66] *Tantratattva* (Principles of Tantra) ed. Arthur Avalon (Madras: Ganesh and Co., 1914, 1960) 544; Zimmer, *Philosophies of India*, 572-73.

[67] Kakar, *Shamans, Mystics and Doctors*, 153.

[68] M.P. Pandit, *Lights on the Tantras* (Madras: Ganesh and Co., 1977) 6.

Features of Tantric Practice

Tantrikas believe that the various religious texts were provided for different eras. The *Kularṇava Tantra* says:

> For the first of the four world ages *śruti* (Veda) was given; for the second, *smṛti* (the teaching of the sages, Dharmaśastra, etc.), for the third, *puraṇa* (the epics, etc.), and for the fourth, *agama* (the Tantras).[69]

In the *Mahanirvaṇa Tantra*, Parvatī describes the first *yuga* or age, the *Kṛtya* or *Satya Yuga*, as an age of virtue and happiness. In the second age, the *Treta Yuga*, *dharma* was disordered and the vedic rites no longer effective. The third or *Dvapara* age was marked by the loss of one half of dharma, and illness of people's bodies and minds. The present age is the *Kali* age; *dharma* is destroyed, and people are gluttonous, malicicious, stupid, shameless, and suffering. For this crude age, Tantra is prescribed.[70] *The Kamakhya Tantra* classifies persons according to three dipositions: the *paśu* or animal, the *vīra* or heroic, and the *divya* or divine.[71] These correspond generally to Saṃkhya's three *guṇas*: *tamas* (inertia), *rajas* (activity), and *sattva* (awareness). While *sattva* is the ideal in classical Saṃkhya-Yoga, Tantra holds the *vīra* to be the

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[69] Sir John Woodroffe, *Shakti and Shakta* (Madras and London, 1929) 7; cited in Zimmer, *Philosophies of India*, 570.

[70] *Mahanirvana Tantra* 1:20-52 (*The Great Liberation*), 7-14.

[71] Basu, *Fundamentals of the Philosophy of Tantras*, 72.

disposition most suited to the present *Kali* age.[72] Tantric *sadhana* can be undertaken only under the direction of a qualified *guru*, a spiritually awakened person, who grants "an influx of spiritual energy" (*śaktipata*) that releases potentials from within the aspirant.[73] Some knowledge must be imparted by a *guru* and cannot be gained from texts. M.P. Pandit writes: "No text gives the *sadhana* in full for it cannot. The crucial part, the *life* of the *sadhana* in fact, is communicated in person, in secret, by the Teacher to the disciple."[74]

Tantric practice is not restricted to the performance of specific spiritual disciplines, but is meant to be integrated in all moments of life. Characteristic of the tantric approach to daily life is spontaneity and acute attunement with one's environment. Kakar quotes a contemporary *tantrika*, a Bengali economist in his early 40's, whose family has practiced Tantra for three generations:

> The true tantrik is always in a state of nonsuppression and enjoyment. The purpose of every moment of life is to experience *ananda*. *Ananda* is true enjoyment of everything that comes your way. If there is a heat wave, I will not try to make it less by using a fan or an air conditioner. Nor will I try to put up with the heat by turning my mind away and bearing it in the manner of the Stoics. The true tantrik puts himself, or rather *is*, in a body-mind state where he *enjoys* the heat... as he will enjoy the cold. Ideally, a tantrik

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[72] *Mahanirvana Tantra*, 1:54-61 (*Great Liberation*), 15-18.

[73] Banerji, *Brief History of Tantra Literature*, 32; Basu, *Fundamentals of the Philosophy of Tantras*, 622.

[74] Pandit, *Lights on the Tantra*, 9.

> is in such a state of attunement with his environment, with what is possible, that his desire awakens just at the moment that the universe is willing to grant it... he has developed his capacity for attention and is intensely aware of where he is and what he is doing at every single moment of time... In fact, in his state of nonsuppression and attunement, a real tantrik becomes aware a little earlier that others when a storm is due or a heat wave is coming so as to be prepared to enjoy them.[75]

A central principle of tantric philosophy is *kriya*, the principle of spontaneous activity. *Kriya* has resonance with the Taoist idea of *hsiao-yao yu* 逍遙遊, "free and easy wandering," or *tzu-jan* 自然, "spontaneity," and Sufism's *mauja*, "free and joyous activity." Within Hinduism, *kriya* is comparable to the doctrine of *līla*, the sportive play of *Brahman* by which the universe is created. *Kriya* is the *sadhaka's* free action, issuing from desirelessness. It is distinct from volitional or ethical action --where will is exerted-- and also distinct from neurotic behavior, unfree because it is driven by inner psychological tensions.[76] As regards systematic practice, Tantra's fundamental method, like that of classical Yoga, is meditation. A point of divergence is that while classical Yoga aims for meditative states increasingly free of materiality, in Tantra, symbols are central as supports for meditation. Main forms of tantric meditative symbols are *mantras* or sacred sounds, *yantras* or visual symbols, and *mudra* or ritual gestures. These symbols consolidate and organize energy

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[75] Kakar, *Shamans, Mystics and Doctors*, 166-68.

[76] Mishra, *Significance of the Tantric Tradition*, 3-7.

between practitioner and cosmos. Transformation of energy, *śakti*, is an inescapable fact of existence, and tantric *sadhana* uses systematic practices to yoke cosmic energy and manifest it in more sublime ways. Foundational to this is purification, explained by Woodroffe in terms of making the pure *guṇa* called *sattva* predominate by utilizing the *guṇa rajas*, the dynamic principle of the two other *guṇas*.[77] Classical Yoga on the other hand, recommends *sattvic* or pure activities, foods, and so on, for supporting the predomination of purity.

The aim of tantric *sadhana* is reintegration of the consciousness, which is fragmented by various mental activities, and recovery of one's identity with cosmic consciousness, *Param Śiva*. Eliade identifies two stages of tantric *sadhana*: cosmicization of the human being, and transcendence of the cosmos. The preeminent sign of transcendence is the *kuṇḍalinī's* union with *Śiva* in the *sahasrara cakra*.[78] Yogic disciplines of *dharaṇa* and *dhyana*, concentration and contemplation are necessary for the interiorization of iconography, a universe of symbols which the *sadhaka* enters and assimilates, incorporating into himself the sacred force sustaining them. The tantric approach to *sadhana* is illuminated by *nyasa*, a practice related to iconographic meditation. *Nyasa* [√*nyas*, 'to place'] is "ritual projection" of divinities into various parts of the body:

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[77] Woodroffe, *Introduction to Tantra Shastra*, 21.

[78] Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, 244-45.

> The disciple "projects" the divinities, at the same time touching various areas of his body; in other words, he homologizes his body with the tantric pantheon, in order to awaken the sacred forces asleep in the flesh itself.[79]

Shah explains the significance of *nyasa* as the *sadhaka's* realizing that his body and mind are of the nature of consciousness, and by spreading the presence of consciousness throughout himself, he grasps his primordial divinity.[80]

Yantra and *mantra* are important tools of tantric practice, serving as supports for meditative concentration. More than this, they are emanations of the primordial unity; they embody the cosmic manifestation, and in the concrete forms of visual-patterns (*yantra*) and sound-patterns (*mantra*), they are assimilable by the *sadhaka* for the restoration of his own identity with *Param Śiva*. A *yantra* is a diagram "drawn or engraved on metal, wood, skin, stone, paper, or simply traced on the ground or a wall."[81] The feature of a *yantra* symbolize e.g., the elements of creation, human faculties, obstacles to progress, the various breaths, deities, and many other aspects of tantric soteriology.

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[79] Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, 209-11.

[80] Shah, *Tantra, its Therapeutic Aspect*, 40.

[81] Louis Renou, *L'Inde Classique*, 568, cited in Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, 219.

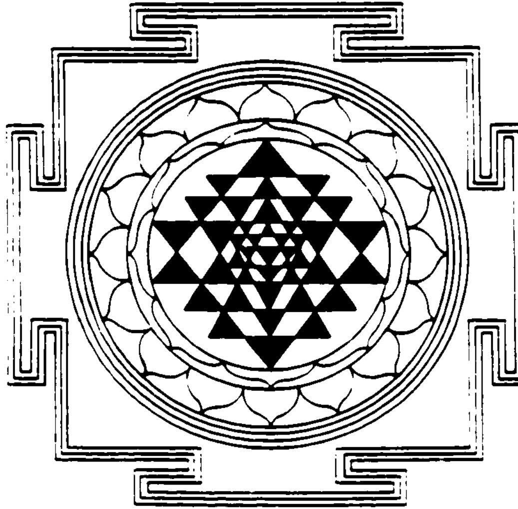


Figure 7: *Śrī Yantra*
drawn by John Casey

Śrī Yantra contains a series of mutually inter-penetrating triangles, the upward ones representing the masculine *Śiva* and the downward ones the feminine *Śakti*, converging to a central point (*bindu*), signifying the undifferentiated *Brahman*.[82] *Yantra* literally means instrument, or a device to hold or control; its verbal root is √*yam*, 'to control'. The idea of the *yantra* illuminates the nature of tantric practice wherein mystical communication is established with some level of the

[82] See for example, *Śrī-Cakra, its Yantra, Mantra, and Tantra*, by S.K. Ramachandra Rao (Bangalore: Kalpatharu Research Academy, 1982).

tantric universe's countless levels, "in order finally to reduce them to unity and master them."[83] John Casey, who rendered the *yantra* above, observes that *Śrī Yantra* is naturally captivating to the sense of vision. Concentration on the *yantra* sustains a dynamic tension between archetypal elements such as bounded/ boundless, and diversity/unity, evoked by the containing square and the expanding circle. Śrī Yantra stimulates multi-planed awareness; a prominent example is the primordial sense of directionality. The four gateways recall the front/back/left/right orientation that conditions the experience of embodied beings. Casey captures the essence of *Śrī Yantra's* power in noting the efficacy of the Great *Yantra* as a meditative object for collecting attention to a single point.[84]

Mantra Yoga

The idea of mystical sounds has roots in the Vedas. The great seed-*mantra* *Om* is the source of, and the summation of, all sounds.[85] *Om* is identified in the *Yajur-veda* with *Brahman*, with the Vedas, and with eminent gods. In classical Yoga, *Om* is the designator of the Lord Iśvara. The *Brahmaṇas* contain *mantras* later used in Tantra, but it remained for Buddhist

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[83] Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, 225-26.

[84] John Casey, Drawing of *Śrī Yantra*, and remarks. Honolulu, HI: 1994.

[85] Sir John Woodroffe, *The Garland of Letters* (*Varṇa-mala*), *Studies in the Mantra Śastra* (Madras: Ganesh and Co., 1963) 232.

and Śaiva tantrism to accord *mantra* the status of a vehicle of salvation, *mantrayana*.[86] Speech is the mother of creation in the Hindu tradition. In the *Ṛgveda*, *vac*, the personification of speech, says:

> I bring forth the Father, at the summit of this (cosmos). My womb (origin) is within the waters, in the ocean. Thence I extend myself throughout all the worlds; yonder heaven also I touch with my peak.
>
> I also blow forth (pervading everything) like the wind, taking to myself all the worlds. Beyond the heaven, beyond this earth, so have I become in grandeur."[87]

Mantra Yoga uses the ontological power of the word in the context of tantric *sadhana's* interiorization of cosmic forces. A *mantra* is a sequence of "seed-sounds" or *bījas* (*bīja*: 'seed').[88] Each *mantra* has "a characteristic pronunciation and intonation which the disciple normally learns from his *guru*."[89] The verbal root of *mantra* is √*man*, 'to think', but more broadly, to consider, to learn, to understand. As regards the meaning of *mantras*, some are

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[86] Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, 212.

[87] *Ṛgveda* 10:125.7-8 trans. Franklin Edgerton. Cited by Eliot Deutsch, "The Ontological Power of Speech" in *Creative Being* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press, 1992) 97.

[88] The Sanskrit alphabet consists of the 49 primordial *bījas* or seed-sounds, arranged in a logical matrix. The matrix of the Sanskrit alphabet presents a set of the most pure and basic sounds producable by the human vocal apparatus. The matrix is systematically arranged according to factors such as the point in the mouth where the sound is articulated (e.g., *ka* is articulated in the throat, and *ma* at the lips).

[89] Kakar, *Shamans, Mystics and Doctors*, 172.

comprised of actual words, while others are comprised purely of non-word combinations of seed-sounds. In either case, the seed-sounds comprising the *mantra* have esoteric meanings understood by the *mantra's* possessor. Further, *mantras* transcend the realm of representational language; the seed-sounds are considered to be of the nature of *Brahman* and to be manifestations of *Śakti* or cosmic energy. According to the *Viṣva-sara Tantra*, *Brahman* in its fundamental form as sound, *śabda-brahman*, is the substance of all *mantras*, and exists in the body of the person, *jīvatma*. *Sabda-brahman* has an "unlettered form" *(dhvani)*, i.e., primal sound not produced by the human voice, and also a "lettered" form (*varṇa*), which is produced by the voice. *Dhvani* is the source of *varṇa*, and is a subtle aspect of the *jīva's* vital *śakti*.[90] *Mantra* according to Eliade is a "symbol" in the archaic sense: "It is simultaneously the symbolized 'reality' and the symbolizing 'sign.'"[91]

Two important practical and philosophical aspects of mantra are the use of the *bījas* or phonemes as supports for concentration, and "the elaboration of a gnostic system and an interiorized liturgy through revalorization of the archaic traditions concerning 'mystical sound'."[92] A central instance of the interiorization of mystical sound is Kuṇḍalinī Yoga's concept that each of the

[90] Sir John Woodroffe, *The Garland of Letters* (*Varṇamala*), 218-19, 232; Woodroffe, *Introduction to Tantra Shastra*, 81-82.

[91] Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, 215.

[92] Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, 212-13.

cakras has a certain number of petals on which appear the written forms of particular seed-sounds or *bīja-mantras*, together comprising the 49 sounds of the Sanskrit alphabet. Consonant with the vedic view that the world emerged ultimately from the vibration of *śabda-brahman*, the sounds of the Sanskrit alphabet are thought to embody the constituent energies of the universe, and thus the sounds are sometimes called *mātṛkās*, 'sources' [*mātṛ*, 'mother'].[93] In Woodroffe's words: "as from a mother comes birth, so from *mātṛkā*, or sound, the world proceeds."[94] Singh writes that each letter of *mātṛkā varṇa* is living energy: "They are the acoustic root of the different waves and vibrations of the cosmos. These letters are the representative sonoric manifestations of the universe."[95]

A *bīja-mantra* is a mystic symbol ending with a nasal sound, written in the Devanagarī script with the sign called *anusvara*: a dot above the syllable: वं (*vaṃ*). The *anusvara* is transliterated by an *m* with a dot either above or beneath it: *ṁ* / *ṃ*. Sometimes an alternate symbol is used: the *anunasika*, which means "through the nose." The *anunasika* is also called *candrabindu*, "dot within a moon": वँ (*vaṃ*). The sound indicated by these signs is pronounced somewhat like the *-ng-* in the English word fi*ng*er, or

[93] Banerji, *Brief History of Tantra Literature*, 116.

[94] Woodroffe, *Introduction to Tantra Shastra*, 107.

[95] Singh, *Tantra, its Mystic and Scientific Basis*, 79.

song. When intoning *bīja-mantras*, the nasal ending is not pronounced as an *m* sound, at the lips, but is "sounded nasally, high up in the bridge of the nose."[96] [This is why *mantras* written in Roman transliteration sometimes end with *-ng* instead of *m*.] Basically, a *bīja-mantra* consists of a single nasalized seed-sound, but compounds such as *Hṛīṃ* and *Aiṃ* are also called *bījas*.

Bīja-mantras serve as supports for meditation, and as the *sadhaka* progresses, their sounds, and their written forms on specific petals of the *cakras*, are said to become perceptible by mystical or supra-empirical hearing and vision. *Om* or *Aum* is written ॐ, with stylistic variations. *Om* is the seed-sound of the 6th *cakra*, in the region between the eyes, and its ending is a labial *m* sound. *Omkara*, the primordial sound *Om*, is said to be spontaneously heard when the *kuṇḍalinī* rises and opens the "vision" of this "third eye."[97] The location of the *bīja-mantras* at the various *cakras* is not arbitrary, but expresses a precise physio-cosmic correspondence: The 50 primordial sounds (the 49 + *kṣaṃ*) have points of resonance within particular regions of the body. [For a simple demonstration, chant the 4th *cakra's* seed-sound *yaṃ*, and the *bīja*-petal sounds *kaṃ*, *khaṃ*, *gaṃ*, *ghaṃ*, etc. Compare the vibration in the area of the 4th *cakra*, the chest region, against the locus

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[96] Sir John Woodroffe, *The Garland of Letters* (*Varṇamala*), 233.

[97] Basu, *Fundamentals of the Philosophy of Tantras*, 622-23.

of vibration of *haṁ*, the seed-sound of the 5th *cakra* in the throat region (its *bīja*-petal sounds begin with vowels: *aṃ*, *aṃ*, *iṃ*, *īṃ*, and so on.)]

Mantra's efficacy depends in part on the fact that correctly recited, *mantras* can "become" what they represent:

> Each god, for example, and each degree of sanctity have a *bīja-mantra*, a "mystical sound," which is their "seed," their "support"-- that is, their very *being*. By repeating this *bīja-mantra* in accordance with the rules, the practitioner appropriates its ontological essence, concretely and directly assimilates the god, the state of sanctity, etc.[98]

The *Mahanirvana Tantra* gives instructions for use of the *mantra* "*Om Saccidekaṁ Brahma*": "*Om*, the One Being Consciousness Brahman."[99] A sense of how the *bīja*-sounds embody both meaning and ontological power is conveyed in the texts's unfolding of *Om* (*Aum*) to reveal that *a* signifies the protector of the world, *u* its dissolver, and *m* its creator.[100] Eliade notes that whole metaphysics may be concentrated in a *mantra*, citing the *Mahayana* Buddhist text *Aṣṭasahasrika-prajña-paramita*, progressively reduced to the *mantra*

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[98] Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, 215.

[99] *Mahanirvaṇa Tantra* 3:12-49 (*Great Liberation*), 33-43.

[100] *Mahanirvana Tantra*, 3:32 (*Great Liberation*), 38.

prarh, by which practitioners are supposed to grasp the meaning of *Prajña-paramita* metaphysics.[101]

There are three main forms of *mantra* recitation: *Vacanic* or aloud, *upanṣu* silently with the lips moving, and *manasika* or mental. While vedic hymns are chanted aloud, Tantra considers silent *mantra*-recitation superior.[102] The repetition of *mantra* is called *japa*. *Mantra-japa* has the power, according to Bhartṛhari's *Vakyapadīya*,[103] to remove ignorance, reveal truth, and lead to realization of liberation. *Mantras* may also be used in preparation for activities of daily life, making the practitioner receptive for an awaiting experience. For instance, a *mantra* comprised of the sounds *Vaṃ*, *Aiṃ* and *Aiṃ-Vaṃ* is recommended in preparation for listening to music. The *bīja Ai* represents the goddess *Sarasvatī*, deity of learning.[104] According to Kakar, *Aiṃ* is associated

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[101] Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, 215.

[102] Singh, *Tantra, its Mystic and Scientific Basis*, 96.

[103] *Vakyapadīya* 1:5,14; cited by Harold Coward, "The Meaning and Power of Mantras in Bhatṛhari's *Vyakyapadīya*," in *Understanding Mantras*, ed. Harvey P. Alper (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989) 172-73.

[104] Shah, *Tantra, its Therapeutic Value*, 114-15.

with the state of wonder, while *Vaṃ* is a sound used as an opening syllable when the practitioner is aiming for a state of expanded awareness.[105] Such a *mantra* is considered purificatory:

> ...this clears the practitioner's inner ear, and prepares his mind to enjoy the music... used in this way, the *mantra* acts a ritual which raises the emotional level of the user to a point where the actual signals are received with the utmost clarity and acted on in the most appropriate way.[106]

In the *Yoga-sutras*, where spiritual progress depends on the stilling of the *vṛttis* or turbulent activities of the mind, *mantra* is recommended for stilling the mind by meditation on God. Classical Yoga's second limb, *niyama*, includes *svadhyaya*, study, and one kind of study is repetition of *Om*, the designator of Iśvara (YBh 2:32).

> The mind of the yogin who constantly repeats the *praṇava* (*Om*) and habituates the mind to the constant manifestation of the idea it carries (i.e., Isvara), becomes one-pointed.
> YBh 1:28

The commentary invokes the vedic assertion of the co-existence and eternal relation of a word and its meaning, and implies that knowledge arising from the *mantra Om* leads ultimately to direct perception of Iśvara.[107] In the

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[105] Kakar, *Shamans, Mystics and Doctors*, 172-73. *Om* as a mantra's opening sound signifies the aim of peaceful state, while *Krauṃ* signifies the goal of a psychic state of active struggle.

[106] Kakar, *Shamans, Mystics, and Doctors*, 174.

[107] Harold Coward, "The Meaning and Power of Mantras in Bhartṛhari's *Vakyapadīya*" in *Understanding Mantras*, 173-74.

tantric text *Ṣaṭ-cakra-nirupaṇa*, however, a fundamental application of *mantra* is the rousing of the dormant *kuṇḍalinī* by the *mantra Huṃ-kara*.[108] Liberation according to both classical Yoga and Tantra requires freeing the mind of its fragmentive activity. *Mantra* is a yogic practice that is therapeutic in virtue of its power to counter the dissipation of mental energy, and to channel the *sadhaka's* power to realize a higher state of being.

AESTHETIC THERAPEUTICS IN TANTRA

Hinduism's therapeutic impetus is evident in Śaṅkara's speaking of ultimate liberation as health, *svasthya*, "self-abiding," and all the way back to this hymn to Rudra (Śiva) in the *Ṛgveda*, one of humankind's oldest texts:

> May I attain a hundred winters, O Rudra,
> through the most comforting remedies given by you!
> Drive away from us enmity, farther away distress,
> away diseases - in all directions!
> ...Bring us across to the further shore of distress
> for our well-being. Keep away all onsets of infirmity!
>
> ...Cause our heroes to thrive with your remedies!
> I hear of you as the best physician of physicians.
> RV 2:33.2-4[109]

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[108] *Ṣaṭ-cakra-nirupana* 50; Woodroffe, trans. *Serpent Power*, 455.

[109] Walter H. Maurer, trans. *Pinnacles of India's Past, Selections from the Ṛgveda*. University of of Pennsylvania Studies on South Asia, vol. 2. Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins Publishing Co., 1986) 124.

If it is granted that liberation is healing, in the sense of gaining freedom from limitations and suffering, each of the many Hindu religious and philosophical traditions can be seen, on its own terms, as having some therapeutic concern. In seeking an increasingly adequate account of religious therapeutics, the initial model derived from classical Yoga and Āyurveda is next expanded with Tantra's "aesthetic" therapeutics. I understand *aesthetic* not only in reference to art, but in its original sense, pertaining to sense perception [Gk. *aisthenasthai*, 'to perceive'].[110] Tantra's concept of the body as part of the sacred creation, and as an instrument and subject of enlightenment, opens the way for aesthetic forms of religious practice, such as music and dance, whose therapeutic properties are both psychophysical and religious.

Therapeutic Elements of Tantra

Tantra's impetus as a religious therapeutic is evident in the *Mahanirvaṇa* Tantra when Śakti addresses Śiva as "Lord among physicians of earthly ills."[111] The word used for ills is *bhavavyadhi*, explained by Woodroffe as meaning "both the ill of existence itself (i.e., the cycle of rebirth and death), and the ills flowing therefrom."[112] Among Indian traditions, Tantra is outstanding for its concern with practical problems over philosophical ones, and on this basis, Basu

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[110] *OED*, s.v. "aesthetic."

[111] *Mahanirvaṇa Tantra*, 4:7 (*Great Liberation*), 65.

[112] Avalon, *Great Liberation*, 65 n4.

notes Tantra's affinity with the art of medicine.[113] Eliade locates the source of Tantra's therapeutic concern in its conception that the great malady of human life, "suffering," in soteriological terms, arises from "the shattering of the primordial Unity," co-extensive with the creation and coming-to-be of all things.[114] Tantric religious therapeutics therefore focus on the recovery of unity, particularly utilizing somatic experience for meditation and attainment of liberative knowledge. Psychologically, Tantra implies that the healthy personality is integrated --not fragmented-- especially in virtue of recommending that desires be sublimated or otherwise recast, rather than being eliminated or repressed. Kakar puts it this way:

> The healthy personality in Tantra is neither passive nor desireless; it has only redefined the terms of the struggle between desire and a world which is often unable and unwilling to gratify it.[115]

Tantra, with other Indian traditions, promotes liberation by means of knowledge, but (like classical Yoga), its psychophysical therapeutics are liberative as well.[116] Tantra holds that ignorance of the identity of self and ultimate reality produces spiritual illness, and perpetuation of the cycle of death and rebirth. Shah identifies a range of therapeutic applications of tantric theory and practice,

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[113] Basu, *Fundamentals of the Philosophy of Tantras*, 82.

[114] Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, 206.

[115] Kakar, *Shamans, Mystics and Doctors*, 166.

[116] Shah, *Tantra, its Therapeutic Aspect*, 3.

presenting perspectives on health conceived in terms of equilibrium among Yoga's five *pranas* or vital airs, Āyurveda's three *dosas*, and the five *mahabhutas* or basic elements of Saṃkhya-Yoga.

Shah examines the therapeutic powers of four manifestations of *kundalinī* energy. Its *kriyavatī* aspect is *kundalinī's* manifestation on the physical plane; this is the domain of vital energy resulting from practice of Hatha Yoga. *Kundalinī's kalavatī* aspect pertains to energy manifest as the digestive fire, whose function is necessary for physical health. The *vedhamayī* aspect concerns the rising of *kundalinī* through the *cakras*. Each *cakra* is associated with a particular *mahabhuta* or element, and with cultivation of one's power to control the ascent of *kundalinī*, the *sadhaka* is said to be able to influence the five elements, whose proper proportions affect one's state of health. Finally, the *varnamayī* aspect concerns pronunciation of the *varnas*, the sounds of the Sanskrit alphabet. Each of the 49 sounds is a manifestation of the *vaikhari* or audible form of *śabdabrahman*, and according to the tantric text *Śarada Tilaka*, each sound is associated with either the *ida-nadī* (governing vital currents), or the *pingala-nadī* (governing mental currents). For instance, short vowels are contained in *pingala* and long vowels in *ida*. [To gain some appreciation of how such a concept could function concretely, pronounce aloud and compare the different qualities of the Sanskrit short vowel *a* ("uh"), and the long vowel *a* ("ahh).] Shah hypothesizes that the excess of vital current can produce erratic

functions within the body-mind complex, while the excess of mental current may lead to physical inflexibility and rigidity in the personality.[117]

Sanskritist Vyaas Houston corroborates the claim that oral Sanskrit can influence psychophysical states. In his discussion of how one can become exquisitely aware of the unique resonance of each of Sanskrit's 49 sounds, he compares the effects of uttering aspirated and unaspirated consonants:

> ...one of the great pleasures of the Sanskrit language lies in the alternation between minimal-breath and maximal-breath consonants. The minimizing of breath while producing a consonant, when for example, touching the tip of the tongue behind the teeth in *ta*, brings about an intensely focused one-pointedness of concentration; while a consonant released with maximal breath, like *tha* has an expansive liberating effect. It releases pressure from the heart and chest, and creates a happy relaxed feeling.[118]

Mantric utterances thus have application as a religious therapeutic using the medium of speech: Correct pronunciation of suitable combinations of letters produces resonances that can equilibrate the circulation of energies in a person. Shah writes that this therapeutic application of kuṇḍalinī's *varṇamayī* aspect can be performed by a healer on behalf of a patient, while the first three can be utilized only by an individual whose tantric practice has developed his power to use *kuṇḍalinī's* manifestations on behalf of his own health.[119]

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[117] Shah, *Tantra, its Therapeutic Aspect*, 51-54.

[118] Vyaas Houston, "Sanskrit, Planetary Language?" in *Devavaṇī: Sanskrit, Sacred Language and Self Knowledge* (Warwick, NY: American Sanskrit Institute, 1993) 10.

[119] Shah, *Tantra, its Therapeutic Aspect*, 54.

Sacred Music and Dance

Tantric music and dance are religious arts expressing the two fundamental manifestations of primordial *śakti* or energy: vibration and movement. Śiva is known as *Naṭeśvara*, lord of the dance [√*naṭ*, 'to dance'], an appellation reflecting the tantric conception of constant motion within the cosmos. A dancer, through ritual gestures (*mudras*) becomes attuned to, and manifests, the rhythms of the cosmos, thus instantiating (for self and for those witnessing the dance) the primordial oneness of self and *Brahman*. This function of ritual dance is religiously therapeutic: Dance serves to restore well-being by permitting direct experience of, and thus knowledge of, the proper relation of self with that which is sacred. Religious dance has therapeutic properties in the psychophysical domain as well: For the better expression of mood and meaning, a dancer utilizes the yogic practices of breath control (*praṇayama*) and postures (*asana*) to gain calmness of mind, and physical fitness and flexibility.

Music, too, is a manifestation of the cosmic *śakti*. Swami Prajñanananda explains that the *nada śakti* or primordial sound energy [√*nad*, 'to sound'] can be experienced by a musician and listeners, and activate *kuṇḍalinī*.

> Gradually the awakened energy penetrates all the force centers of the body and finally reaches the thousand petalled lotus of the *sahasrara*, the seat of all consciousness, *Parama Śiva*, and then *sadhaka*-artist and the sincere music listeners feel divine communion of the *jīvatma* and *paramatma*. They attain the fruition of the *nada sadhana*, which enables

> them to cut asunder the knots of nescience and realize the transcendental *Brahman*.[120]

The *Nada-bindupaniṣad*, which instructs about the yogic liberative practice of listening to the "inner sound," articulates the value of sound for developing meditative concentration:

> The mind, the snake abiding in the hole of the interior of the body, caught by (the snake-charmer of) sweet sound, completely forgetting the world, does not run anywise, becoming one-pointed.[121]

The "inner sound," *nada*, is one of the levels of the manifestation of *śabda-brahman*, or the Absolute as Sound. *Nada* is suprasensuous sound, audible only with sufficient meditative effort and purification of the *naḍīs* or nerve currents. The *Yoga-śikhopaniṣad* distinguishes four forms of *śabda-brahman*. The most subtle is *para-śabda* or supreme sound, associated with the *muladhara* or root *cakra*. Next is *paśyanti-śabda*, "visible sound," by means of which yogins see the universe." It is associated with the *anahata cakra* of the heart area. *Anahata* means "unstruck," and refers to unstruck sound. *Paśyanti-śabda* is also known as *anahata*, sound which does not issue from material vibration. The unstruck sound is heard as the *praṇava*, i.e., the sacred sound *Om*, which is according to the *Yogasutras*, the designator of Iśvara. The third form of *śabda-brahman* is *madhyama-śabda*, "middle sound": the 49 sounds of

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[120] Swami Prajñanananda, *A Historical Study of Indian Music* (1975), xxviii; cited in Shah, *Tantra, its Therapeutic Aspect*, 60-61.

[121] *Nada-bindupaniṣad*, 43, trans. T.R. Śrīnivasa Ayyaṅgar, *The Yoga-Upaniṣads* (Madras: The Adyar Library, 1938) 178.

the Sanskrit alphabet. Finally, the coarsest form of sound is *vaikhara-śabda*, "manifest sound," whose manifestation is speech.[122] Tantra, even with its emphasis on the somatic, recommends silent recitation of mantra. This attests to the power of the Indian inclination to transcend or sublimate physicality. Both "inner" and "outer" sound are important in Tantra, and in the present context of body and religiousness, it is clear that physically audible sound, particularly in the form of sacred music, is important in Tantra's aesthetic therapeutics.

Ragas, or melodic frameworks, cultivate meditative awareness in both musicians and listeners. The verbal root of *raga* is √*rañj*, 'to color' 'to please': "Hence the term occupies a rich semantic field that includes such things as color, feeling, intensity, passion, love, and beauty. The primary aim of a *raga*, then, is to bring delight by stimulating an emotional response in the hearer."[123] From a tantric standpoint, *ragas* can calm and concentrate the mind, and stimulate it aesthetically in the direction of religious realization.

Whether or not one accepts tantric interpretations of how dance and music can contribute to spiritual realization, Tantra provides useful articulations of the spiritual potential of engagement with art. Tantra embraces the somatic and the aesthetic within its religious domain, and provides a conception of

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[122] *Yoga-śikhopaniṣad*, 3:1-5, in *Yoga-Upaniṣads* 366-68.

[123] Lewis Rowell, *Music and Musical Thought in Early India* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1992) 10, 166-67.

art-forms that is both therapeutic and religious. If we take the term *aesthetic* in its fundamental meaning of pertaining to sense experience, and take the term *art* in its broader connotation as applicable to forms that evoke meanings beyond themselves, Tantra indicates that the realm of aesthetics can be a significant dimension of religious therapeutics. Insight into religious therapeutics in the domain of aesthetics could be developed by considering the healing applications of religious expressions such as Navajo and Tibetan sandpaintings, and the use of sacred music, dance and other arts in a range of religions.

Chapter 5
COMPARATIVE RELIGIOUS THERAPEUTICS

RECONSTRUCTING RELIGIOUS THERAPEUTICS

Inquiry into religious therapeutics can address particular traditions, or be done comparatively. Particular themes can be investigated, e.g., sacred song or meditation techniques; or one can excavate the therapeutic concerns and contributions of whole traditions or sects. Methods include analysis of texts and meanings expressible in language, and descriptive analysis of concrete phenomena. Reconstructing the foundations of a heuristic of religious therapeutics for guiding inquiry across world traditions would benefit from collaborative effort. Here I have offered some initial steps toward identifying relations among health, healing and religiousness, finding the Indian tradition fertile ground for accomplishing the main purpose of this study: establishing the foundations of a heuristic of religious therapeutics.

Among world religious traditions, classical Yoga proved to be a fruitful starting point for inquiry into body, health, and religiousness, and it provided a paradigmatic system of religious therapeutics. Āyurveda supplied the field of medical therapeutics for the model, and Tantra contributed the dimension of aesthetics. Yoga, Tantra and Āyurveda are strongly oriented toward the physical body, but investigation of religious therapeutics in other areas of Hinduism --Vedanta for instance-- could emphasize therapeutic elements

concerned more with the healing that is liberation, rather than emphasizing the somatic aspects of religious therapeutics. In this study of body and religiousness, classical Yoga, Tantra and Āyurveda were featured in part because their somatic orientations make their therapeutic dimensions more palpable. These three traditions are in some ways iconoclastic in the larger context of Hindu views of the body, but thus they are especially interesting for extending our insight into body and religiousness.

Inquiry into the body in Hinduism reveals not a Cartesian material body, but concepts of body as a conscious locus of activity, a system of sub-systems participating in active relation within a web of other systems-- bio-physical, social, and spiritual. The *Upaniṣad's* five sheaths model, the *Bhagavadgīta's* "field" conception of the person, Āyurveda's ecological view of body and land as the two kinds of place, and Tantra's identification of person as a physio-conscious microcosm within the physio-conscious world macrocosm, each counters not only the Cartesian view of body, but the stereotype that the Indian traditions assume a dualistic view of body and Self.

Classical Yoga understands mind and body as aspects of the psychophysical person; according to Yoga's Saṃkhyan metaphysical foundations, body, mind and senses are all evolutes of mattter, *prakṛti*. The position that "mind" and "body" are dimensions of a unity, rather than separate entities, grounds a pragmatically valuable orientation to etiology and therapeutics,

which recognizes the mutual influence of physical and mental factors in health and illness. Mind-body dualism is thus avoided in Yoga, but there remains a dualism separating mind-body from consciousness. Apart from the metaphysical problems inherent in this dualism, Yoga's distinction between mind-body and consciousness yields an understanding of the relation of health and religiousness that is perhaps the main insight of this study. Similar to the way that mental factors have physiological consequences, and physical factors have mental consequences for health, Yoga shows that the wellness of the mind-body can assist the attainment of spiritual well-being, and conversely, that the recovery of spiritual self-nature and well-being helps to heal and vitalize the body-mind. Yoga is extremely health-oriented, but the health it seeks is ultimate liberation, for which the freedom of psychophysical health is an instrument.

Āyurveda provides a comprehensive system of preservation and restoration of psychophysical health. From a religious standpoint, Āyurveda expands the yogic model of religious therapeutics with a system of properly medical therapeutics. Āyurveda can also supplement the disease-orientation of contemporary scientific medicine with its treatment of health as a positive state. Āyurveda relies heavily on the notion of "equilibrium" as a determinant of health, starting with the idea of health as balance among the three *doṣas* or bioenergetic principles, and having applications in other domains, such as a suitable ratio of work, rest, and recreation, and the eating of types and amounts of food in proportion to individual requirements and digestive capacity.

Āyurveda's emphasis on equilibrium should, however, be counterbalanced with a view of health not just in terms of a *state*, but as a dynamic *force*, the power to resist and overcome threats to one's well-being. Embodied life involves a dynamic tension between health and illness; health is not constant well-being, but consists in the power to overcome sickness, to overcome oneself. In his life and thought, Nietzsche valued sickness as well as health, and counted illnesses as "great stimulants to life."[1] In the tides of illness and health, sickness incites inclination toward life and health, and the saying Yes to being. The *great health*, Nietzsche says, "one does not merely have but also acquires continually..."[2] The great health is great enough to encompass illness, and one can go beyond *accepting* sickness, to *affirming* it as a necessary part of life. In Indian terms, *śakti*, the dynamic aspect of being, can represent the nature of health as a power, a power to thrive in one's self-nature, and to resist and overcome intrusions --biological, and psychological-- to the integrity of one's being.

The psychophysical person is bound to struggle with health problems, but the spiritual self suffers no illness, thus religiousness offers a means of realizing one's primordial wholeness and freedom. Classical Yoga makes clear how liberation is healing: freedom from limitations and suffering, and liberation *to* a

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[1] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power* [1901], trans. Walter Kaufmann and R.J. Hollingdale (NY: Vintage Books, 1967) 520.

[2] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science* [1882], trans. Walter Kaufmann (NY: Random House, 1974) 346.

state of unimpeded self-identity and well-being. Health, I have argued, is not just psychophysical well-being, but based on Yoga's concept of the person as having both psychophysical and spiritual dimensions, health can be properly predicated of the whole person, including the spiritual self. Healing, in religious terms, does not mean curing the spiritual self, for the spiritual self is not subject to sickness; it means overcoming the impediments that stand in the way of realizing one's self-nature in its full identity and freedom.

Health is fundamental to nearly every human enterprise, and is thus an important consideration in planning and evaluating situations in contexts such as social welfare and education. The determinants of health suggested in this study --development, and freedom from pain, for example-- are offered, in part, to contribute concepts and vocabulary for supporting well-being in a range of settings. An interesting outcome of this study is the way the general themes that emerged in analysis of determinants of health (biological and ecological, medical and psychological, socio-cultural and aesthetic, and metaphysical and religious), are echoed in the reconstruction of the model of religious therapeutics. Classical Yoga provided the initial religious foundation with 5 main areas. Expansion of the model incorporates the medical dimension of Āyurveda, the aesthetic dimension of Tantra, and in these final pages, the addition of a further dimension of religious therapeutics: *community*, which includes relationality and communication in bio-physical, social and religious domains.

***Branches of religious therapeutics*:**

1. Philosophical foundations
2. Soteriology
3. Value theory and ethics
4. Physical practice
5. Cultivation of consciousness
6. Medicine
7. Aesthetics
8. Community

Our various disciplines offer diverse conceptual and methodological resources for understanding and perpetuating health. This study suggests for further inquiry and action related to health, not just inter-disciplinary but *trans-disciplinary* approaches. We can do more than apply concepts and methods of philosophy, medicine, religion, anthropology, and so on, but (after the manner that holistic medicine recommends focusing on the patient and not the science), take the human being, not the discipline, as a starting point. In responding to the wholeness of the human being, we can create more integrated --and perhaps more useful-- constellations of the registers of human knowledge. Religion, with its concern for human well-being in its various forms, is a rich context for inquiry into health. To anticipate further directions for inquiry into religious therapeutics, following are some comments on elements of religious therapeutics in some representative religious traditions.

HEALTH/MEDICINE IN SOME WORLD RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS

Western Traditions:
Health/Medicine in Judaism, Christianity and Islam

Healing, that is, recovery from suffering and impairment, and attainment of greater well-being and vitality, is a major theme in the religious traditions of the world. In Zoroastrianism, the ancient Western religion of Zoroaster (Zarathustra), the Avestan word *frashōkereti*, means "healing" and "renovation." The term signifies the process of world purification and renewal. Ultimate religious healing in Zoroastrianism entails an embodied life in Paradise where there is neither time nor death.[3] In Judaism, God is the divine physician; God is he "who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases" (Ps. 103:3). The 12th century rabbi-physician Maimonides gave recommendations for hygiene in his summary of the code of Jewish law, and wrote: "One should aim to maintain physical health and vigor in order that his soul may be upright, in order to know God..."[4] One of Judaism's contributions to inquiry in religious therapeutics is the religious imperative to perpetuate healing. Maimonides locates the biblical mandate to heal in the *mitzvah* or religious obligation given in Deuteronomy 22:2, that one must return lost objects to one's brother. Maimonides understands this as warranting also

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[3] Lawrence E. Sullivan, "Healing" in *Encyclopedia of Religion*, 16 vols. ed. Mircea Eliade (NY: Macmillan, 1987) 6:226.

[4] Moses Maimonides; cited in David M. Feldman, *Health and Medicine in the Jewish Tradition* (NY: Crossroad Publishing, 1986) 15.

that health must be restored to those who have lost it.[5] Feldman says of Judaism and healing:

> Judaism may indeed be a practical, this-worldly religion and a rational system of thought and action, but it gives equal place to the power of prayer. God's healing work, through either ordinary Providence or miraculous intercession is as much a reality as the pragmatic, human ministrations.[6]

Feldman writes that Judaism's strong ethical imperative "moves us to advance the cause of life and health and good."[7] *Pikkuach nefesh*, the *mitzvah* or religious obligation to protect health, is of such importance that avoidance of threats to life and health call for "setting aside the rest of the Torah." For instance, observance of the Sabbath or of dietary laws are to be set aside where they could interfere with measures necessary to preserve health, one's own or another's. Feldman sees in this *mitzvah* not just a mandate to sustain earthly well-being, but an expression of Judaism's view of the close relationship of physical and spiritual well-being. In the evolution of medical science, Jewish physicians have contributed substantially, and with their fluency in Arabic, Greek, Hebrew and Latin, also served as transmitters of medical knowledge by translating medical texts.[8] An interesting direction for further

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[5] Feldman, *Health and Medicine in the Jewish Tradition*, 16.

[6] Feldman, *Health and Medicine in the Jewish Tradition*, 29.

[7] Feldman, *Health and Medicine in the Jewish Tradition*, 19.

[8] Feldman, *Health and Medicine in the Jewish Tradition*, 41.

understanding of religious therapeutics in Judaism would be study of the extensive hygiene and public health regulations in Leviticus and elsewhere.

As in Judaism, the religious imperative to heal is prominent in Christianity, where Jesus is the *soter*, the healer or savior. Jesus' work on earth embodied three primary instititions of human culture: education, religion, and medicine:

> And Jesus went about all of Gallilee, teaching in their synogogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of disease among the people.
> Mt. 4:23

The close relationship of religion and medicine is clear in the necessity Jesus encountered to do healing in his ministry. Wherever Jesus traveled he met persons suffering sicknesses, and in his compassion and his role of teaching a gospel of salvation, he often performed healings. The centrality of healing in his ministry is evident in Jesus' giving his 12 disciples the power to cast out unclean spirits and to heal all manner of diseases, and instructing them to go forth and teach the gospel and to heal the sick (Mt. 10:1,7-8). The miraculous cures of Jesus serve in the Christian tradition to signify that Jesus was the Messiah. When John heard in prison of the works of Jesus, he sent two disciples to ask Jesus if he were the awaited one. Jesus said they should report to John the proof of this on the basis of the healing miracles they witnessed. (Mt. 11:2-5). Jesus' work as a healer concerns the sickness of sin, for which sickness of the body is symbolic. Encountering a man sick with palsy, Jesus did not seek to cure his physical ailment, but spoke the words,

"Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee." The scribes who were present thought in their own minds that Jesus committed blasphemy. Jesus knew their thoughts, and addressed them thus:

> Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the man sick of palsy) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house.
> Mt. 9:2-6

These verses illuminate an important meaning of healing in the Christian tradition: While Jesus had the power to heal the man's body, the matter of consequence was restoration of the man's spiritual well-being.

Christian religious therapeutics could be further illuminated by consideration of health and healing in contemporary denominations. Two disparate examples are Christian Science and the Adventist tradition. Christian Science is grounded in an idealist metaphysics wherein empirical medical techniques are for the most part rejected, and healing is sought through spiritual means. Emphasis is placed on knowledge of the reality of God and his manifestations as mind and spirit, and of the illusory nature of matter, the body, sickness and death.[9] The Adventists, on the other hand, reject the dichotomy of body and soul, and regard the body as integral in religious life, and health as a moral obligation. In its early years in the 19th century, the

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[9] Rennie B. Schoepflin, "The Christian Science Tradition" in *Caring and Curing, Health and Medicine in the Western Religious Traditions*, ed. Ronald L. Numbers and Darrel W. Amundsen (NY: Macmillan, 1986) 421-446.

Seventh-Day Adventist Church developed sanitariums and promoted vegetarianism, and today it sponsors many programs of health-care provision and education.[10]

Healing is an integral theme of Islam. The processes underlying healing are attributed to God in the *Qur'an* and the *ḥadīth* (reports on the words and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad), and the Qur'an refers to itself as curative: "It is to those who believe a guidance and a healing..." (41:44).

> O men! There has come to you indeed an admonition from your Lord and a healing for what is in the hearts and a guidance and a mercy for the believers.
> *Qur'an*, 10:57

> And we reveal of the Qur'an that which is a healing and a mercy to the believer, and it adds only to the perdition of the unjust
> *Qur'an*, 17:82.

One of the Arabic words meaning "healthy" is *salīm*. Its root, *√s-l-m* --also the root of the word *islam*-- evokes well-being, wholeness, integrality, security and peace. This etymology suggests that health is part of well-being broadly conceived and inclusive of both psychophysical and spiritual concerns.[11]
The Islamic tradition produced an extensive system of medicine, incorporating Greek and Āyurvedic medical knowedge, and along with it, a tradition of

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[10] Ronald L. Numbers and David R. Larson, "The Adventist Tradition" in *Caring and Curing*, 447-467.

[11] Peter Antes, "Medicine and the Living Tradition of Islam," in *Healing and Restoring: Health and Medicine in the World's Religious Traditions*, ed. Lawrence E. Sullivan (NY: Macmillan, 1989) 177.

"Prophetic Medicine."[12] The texts of Prophetic Medicine served purposes including providing the public with information about preventative and curative measures. Prophetic medicine was perhaps also intended to "spiritualize" medicine, to ground it in the Prophet's authority, rather than in the presuppositions of physicians and philosophers.

Fourteenth-century author Ibn Quayyim al-Jauzīya presents Prophetic Medicine, considered to be divinely revealed, as foundational to scientific medicine:

> When a man's heart becomes attuned to the Lord of the world, the creator of ailments and remedies, who governs nature according to his will, other medicines become available that cannot be experienced by an unbelieving and indifferent heart. It has been experienced that when a man's spirit becomes strong and also the soul and bodily nature are strengthened, they cooperate in repelling disease and overcoming it, and this cannot be denied except by the most ignorant of people.[13]

Historically, Islam's valuing of community cohesiveness, and the Qur'an's emphasis on justice, inspired the establishment of institutions for social welfare, including hospitals, many of which were open to peoples of diverse races and faiths.[14] Among the contributions Islam can make to the dialogue on religious therapeutics would be analysis of the *hadīth* literature pertaining to the spiritual

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[12] Fazlur Rahman, *Health and Medicine in the Islamic Tradition* (NY: Crossroad, 1987) 41-42, 75.

[13] Rahman, *Health and Medicine in the Islamic Tradition*, 42-43.

[14] Fazlur Rahman, "Islam and Health/Medicine: A Historical Perspective" in *Healing and Restoring*, 152-53.

functions of illness: for purgation, punishment of sins, and the possibility of consequent reward.[15]

Asian Traditions:
Health/Medicine in Buddhism

The intimate relation of religion and healing is well-exemplified in Buddhism, an Asian tradition that has received considerable attention for its religious therapeutics. K.N. Jayatilleke is among the writers who have identified a parallel between the Four Noble Truths and the principles of medical practice:

1. Life is suffering. *Diagnosis*.
2. The cause of suffering is craving. *Etiology*.
3. Cessation of suffering is possible by cessation of craving. *Prognosis*.
4. The Eightfold Path is the way to cessation of craving. *Therapy*.[16]

The Buddha's work was for the elimination of suffering of all kinds. Illness is a palpable and inescapable form of suffering, and the early Buddhist texts, particularly the *Sutta-Pitaka*, the earliest of the three *pitakas* or "baskets" of the Pali canon, are replete with references to healing that illuminate the Buddha's teaching or *dhamma*. The second *Pitaka*, the *Vinaya*, includes among

[15] Fazlur Rahman, "Islam and Health/Medicine: A Historical Perspective," in *Healing and Restoring*, 157.

[16] K.N. Jayatilleke, *The Message of the Buddha* (NY: Macmillan, 1974) 235.

the rules for the monastic order many injunctions pertaining to health, and the *Mahavagga* section (in *Khandaka* 6) provides extensive information on medicaments and their use. The third *Piṭaka*, the *Abhidhamma*, provides the philosophical grounding of the early Buddhist view of human psychophysical nature, and thus illuminates Buddhist theories of pathogenesis and treatment.

The young Gautama Siddhartha's first witnessing of illness, along with poverty, old age and death, instigated his renunciation. Sickness is one kind of suffering in the 12-Fold chain of Dependent Co-origination, and along with aging and death, is an aspect of the suffering of the twelfth causal link --conditioned by and conditioning-- the cycle of ignorance and rebirth. *Nibanna*, the escape from this cycle, is compared to the absence of all hurt: *arogya*[17]

In accounts of the Buddha's work as a healer of disease, two main methods were employed: teaching and miraculous healing. In either case, the healing was not merely physical curing, but an occasion for the patient's gaining spiritual insight. Those with incurable diseases were instructed about impermanence, those who could be cured were taught to meditate on "The

[17] *Majjhima-nikaya*, 1:510 (*Magandiya*) [*Taishō* edition of the Chinese canon, 26:38:672b]. Cited in Mark Tatz, *Buddhism and Healing, Demieville's Article 'Byō' from Hōbōgirin* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1985) 12.

Seven Limbs of Enlightenment": mindfulness, investigation of things (*dharmas*), striving, joy, tranquility, meditative trance (*samadhi*) and equanimity.

The prescription of meditation for the treatment of illness demonstrates the Buddhist view that mental states condition physical states, in respect of both the cause and the cure of disease. Meditation on the Seven Limbs of Enlightenment is a prescription for overcoming the three poisons: passion, aversion, and ignorance, which correspond to the three physiological poisons: wind, bile, and phlegm.[18]

Early Buddhism regarded physical health as important to prevent the mental distraction that results from pain and weakness, and in order to avoid death before one has accomplished his or her spiritual goal for this lifetime. The four material needs of a monk were robes, food, shelter and medicine. Members of the monastic community, the *saṃgha*, were obligated to care for their fellows who fell ill, because no family members were present to do so, but more significantly, because healing requires spiritual as well as physical assistance, and other members of the *saṃgha* could offer resources such as recitation of the *dhamma* and encouragement in non-attachment.[19]

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[18] Raoul Birnbaum, *The Healing Buddha* (Boulder, CO: Shambhala Publications, 1979) 10-12.

[19] *Mahasaṃghika-vinaya* [*Taishō* 1425:228;455a-457b]. Cited in Tatz, *Buddhism and Healing*, 32.

Mahayana Buddhism, with its emphasis on altruism and compassion, encourages health-care as a profession. The *Brahmajala-satra* states that caring for the sick is one of the eight fields of felicity.[20] The following passage from the *Caṇḍavyuha* indicates the importance of physical health for spiritual attainment, and the imperative to relieve suffering, both physical and spiritual:

> For the bodhisattva who is teaching himself to cultivate awakening, the greatest obstacle is illness. When sentient beings have sick bodies, their minds cannot be at peace; how can they cultivate the perfections? ... The boddhisattva who would cultivate awakening should first of all heal illnesses of the body... he should tend all sentient beings and heal them of all [corporeal] suffering. Only then should he preach the doctrine to subdue their minds.[21]

David J. Kalupahana maintains that healing in Buddhism must not be conceived in terms that segregate the physical from the spiritual. He points out that the person has "come into existence on the basis of a variety of conditions, both physical and mental. It is a process of becoming (*bhava*), not a duality of absolutely independent entities."[22] Healing is thus neither a purely physical matter nor a purely spiritual one. While Zysk's study, *Asceticism and Healing in Ancient India*, presents Buddhist etiological theory on the basis of discourses where the Buddha presents an Āyurvedically-oriented model of

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[20] *Taishō* 1484:2:1005c, cited in Tatz, *Buddhism and Healing*, 43.

[21] *Taishō*, 293:11:710-12 cited in Tatz, *Buddhism and Healing*, 45.

[22] David J. Kalupahana, "Buddhism and Healing," paper presented at the Center for South Asian Studies 10th Spring Symposium: *Healing Systems of South Asia* (University of Hawai'i, Honolulu HI, March 1993) 7.

disease-causation[23], Kalupahana notes with surprise that Zysk does not refer to *Dīgha-nikaya* 3.75, where the Buddha speaks of the three diseases *(abadha)* of desire (*iccha*), malnutrition (*anasana*), and decay (*jara*). Kalupahana disagrees with Zysk's suggestion that Āyurveda was the primary system of healing in the early Buddhist period. Kalupahana allows that later Buddhist monastic communities might have regarded healing in mostly physical terms, but the Buddha's recognition of the interdependence of the physical and mental had the consequence that "the early Buddhist conception of health does not encourage a form of care confined entirely to the physical."[24]

The disease of *desire* or passion (*raga*) and its corollary, aversion (*dveṣa*), cause the root-disease, suffering (*dukkha*). The disease of *malnutrition* is understood from the Buddhist standpoint that the psychophysical personality needs both physical and psychic nutriments. An implication of this point demonstrates Buddhism's potential to illuminate issues in philosophy of health:

> The entire moral life of humanity depends more upon the psychic nutriments than on the physical. What we need to be in contact with, what our mental determinations ought to be, what form of consciousness or awareness we should follow are extremely relevant to the sort of

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[23] Kenneth G. Zysk, *Asceticism and Healing in Ancient India, Medicine in the Buddhist Monastery* (NY and Oxford: Oxford University PRess, 1991) 30, 142 n35. Zysk cites sources including *Saṃyuttanikaya* 4,230-31; *Aṅguttaranikaya* 2,87; 3,31.

[24] Kalupahana, "Buddhism and Healing," 7, 11.

> moral development that will provide for the health of the individual as well as the society.[25]

The third disease, *decay*, is one that Kalupahana says neither Western medicine nor Āyurveda can solve. The Buddhist remedy for coping with inevitable aging and death is the understanding and acceptance of the fact of impermanence (*anicca*). Buddhism is a religious therapeutic offering health or ease (*sukha*) that is at once physical and mental, attainable by elimination of the mental "humors": passion, aversion, and ignorance.[26]

Passion and aversion, the roots of suffering according to Buddhism, correspond with classical Yoga's third and fourth *kleśas* or afflictions. In addition to Buddhism's rich conceptual resources for inquiry into religious therapeutics, an important practical direction is study of Buddhist meditation. Suffering arises owing to mental reactions of liking and disliking. *Vipassana*-meditation is a form of Buddhist meditation aiming to break the cycle of liking, disliking and suffering by observing sensations within one's own body. In the Pali language, *passana* means "seeing," and *vipassana* connotes turning one's vision inward:

> *Vipassana* means a special kind of vision: observation of the reality within oneself. This is achieved by taking as the object of attention one's own physical sensations. The technique is the systematic and dispassionate observation of sensations within oneself. This observation

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[25] Kalupahana, "Buddhism and Healing," 10.

[26] Kalupahana, "Buddhism and Healing," 12, 15-16.

unfolds the entire reality of mind and body.[27]

Vipassana-bhavana is the systematic development of liberative insight gained by meditation on the arising and cessation of one's sensations and feelings. It is practiced not just while in a meditative setting, but as a meditation permeating one's daily activities. *Vipassana* meditation is grounded in the Buddha's teaching of *sattipaṭṭhana*, "mindfulness" of the body's structure, function, postures, and breathing.[28] *Vipassana* is of particular interest in connection with Yogic religious therapeutics because of its focus on the body's soteriological potential. Before leaving Buddhism I must also mention the importance of Tibetan Buddhist medicine for inquiry into religious therapeutics. Tibetan medicine incorporates Buddhist metaphysical and soteriological views along with Āyurvedic and indigenous medical principles and practices.[29] Chinese medicine is extremely sophisticated, and it is probably fair to say that among ancient and traditional medical systems, it is the most enduring and widely practiced, both in its country of origin and in other regions of the world. I must leave the

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[27] William Hart, *The Art of Living, Vipassana Meditation* (San Francisco, CA: Harper and Row, 1987)

[28] See *Maha Satipaṭṭhana Suttanta* (Pondicherry: All India Press, 1985).

[29] See *Tibetan Medicine*, presented and translated by the Ven Rechung Rinpoche (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973, 1976); and *Health Through Balance, An Introduction to Tibetan Medicine*, by Dr. Yeshi Donden, edited and translated by Jeffrey Hopkins (Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 1986).

extensive topic of Chinese philosophy and practice of medicine, and its religious context, to researchers who are more knowledgeable.

American Traditions:
Health/Medicine in Lakota Religious Philosophy

Powerful insights into religious therapeutics are available in non-Western and non-Asian traditions, such as those of Africa, Oceania, Eurasia, and the Americas. Here I look to an American Indian religious tradition as a resource for understanding further dimensions and implications of religious therapeutics. American Indian languages, cultural groups and religious traditions are many and disparate. The present discussion refers to some elements of religious thought and practice of the Lakota, a Siouan-speaking people of the north-central U.S. plains region.

The work of medicine men and medicine women embodies an orientation to religion as a way of life where no aspect of life is excluded, so medicine is concerned with helping oneself and others toward well-being in many areas of life. There are several kinds of medicine people. Some specialize in treating the physical body, attending to injuries and illnesses with physical remedies, such as plant-based pharmaceuticals. Also used are healing measures such as prayer, song, ceremony, and teaching. In Lakota terms, there are many kinds of healers under the heading of "holy people". What we call "medicine man" in English designates the *wicaśa wakan*, "holy man," one who works with the sacred [*wakan*: holy, sacred; *wicaśa*, man]. John Lame Deer explains that

under the white man's term "medicine man" there are a number of specific practitioners: "First we distinguish the healer --*pejuta wicaśa*-- the man of herbs. He does not cure with herbs alone; he must also have the *wakan* power to heal." Lame Deer describes a number of other kinds of practitioners, but concludes that the real medicine man is the *wicaśa wakan*:

> Such a one can cure, prophesy, talk to the herbs, command the stones or conduct the sun dance or even change the weather, but all this is of no great importance to him. They are merely stages he has passed through. The wicaśa wakan has gone beyond all this. He has the *wakanya wowanyanke* --the great vision.[30]

Pejuta wicaśa denotes a physician, one who cures the sick or wounded, making particular use of pharmacological knowledge and plant medicines [*pejuta*: (plant) medicine]. The *pejuta wicaśa* is a kind of *wicaśa wakan*. Medical healing is part of religion, which is evident in the fact that the many kinds of healers --such as the *pejuta wicaśa* (or *pejuta winyela*, medicine woman)-- are religious specialists, each is a particular kind of *wicaśa wakan* (or *winyan wakan*, holy woman).

The *pejuta wicaśa* is in a sub-category of religious specialists called curers: *Wapiyapi or wapiye*, meaning "one who makes over, restores."[31] A similar meaning is expressed in the Lakota word for ceremony, *woapuje*, "to

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[30] John (Fire) Lame Deer and Richard Erdoes, *Lame Deer, Seeker of Visions* (NY: Washington Square Press (Simon and Schuster) 1972)) 144-45.

[31] William K. Powers, *Sacred Language, The Nature of Supernatural Discourse in Lakota* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1986) 181; 194-95.

begin anew," a term that pertains to curing ceremonies and other kinds of ceremonies. In a sense, all ceremonies have a healing function; they are carried out to seek the help of the Great Spirit in its various forms, for help with trouble and suffering. These ceremonials are done with thanksgiving and sacrifice to preserve and increase the vitality of persons and communities.

Contemporary Lakota elder Wallace H. Black Elk explains that "medicine people" properly refers to the spirits who do the actual curing. Wherever some part of the human structure has deteriorated, the medicine man "recreates and reforms it."

> That is why he has his name. That is why we call him Creator. So he reconstructs the human mind and physical body. He recreates the human spirit, so the spirit could wear its robe [physical body] and walk with a clear mind.[32]

Human beings who administer healing are agents for sacred powers, and thus we see the religious basis of curing. Twentieth-century Lakota elder Frank Fool's Crow clarifies the connectedness of Lakota religion and medicine when he speaks of the *Yuwipi*[33] ceremony, often used for healing:

> Many times, when I have been called upon to cure someone... I have held a Yuwipi ceremony first. During the Yuwipi I ask Grandfather

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[32] Wallace H. Black Elk and William S. Lyon *Black Elk, the Sacred Ways of a Lakota* (NY: HarperCollins, 1990) 40-41.

[33] The word *yuwipi* is derived from the verb *yuwi*, 'to wrap up', 'to bind'. In this ceremony the *Yuwipi* man is first tightly bound in a blanket. See William K. Powers, *Yuwipi, Vision and Experience in Oglala Ritual* (Lincoln NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1982).

> to help me, and to show me in the Yuwipi or in the sweatlodge what medicine to use for the person he will heal through me. Everything there is, is here on earth for a purpose, even the people who are ill. So when a person is ill, Grandfather shows me in my vision what medicine he has placed on earth to cure that illness. Grandfather has the power and the knowledge. I am only an old man serving as his instrument, an intercessor for his pity.[34]

Fools Crow says that the power to heal has a religious source, and shows how he takes a religious approach in effecting cures. His remark that "Everything on earth is here for a purpose" demonstrates his view of wellness and illness as parts of the web of life fundamental in Lakota religious cosmology. The Lakota invocation *Mitakuye Oyas'iŋ*, "All My Relations," uttered at the conclusion of prayers and sacred songs, completion of stages of religious ritual, and other occasions, embodies a cosmological, religious, and ethical recognition and reverence for the inter-dependence and sacredness of all aspects of creation. Black Elk (1862-1950) communicates a vision of the relatedness of all living beings in his foreward to the *The Sacred Pipe: Black Elk's Account of the Seven Sacred Rites of the Oglala Sioux*:

> We should understand well that all things are the works of the Great Spirit: the trees, the grasses, the rivers, the mountains, and all the four-legged animals, and the winged peoples; and even more important, we should understand that He is also above all these things and peoples. When we do understand all this deeply in out hearts, then we will fear, and love, and know the Great Spirit, and then we will be and act and live as he intends.[35]

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[34] Thomas E. Mails, assisted by Dallas Chief Eagle, *Fools Crow* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Co.) 93-94.

[35] Joseph Epes Brown, ed., *The Sacred Pipe, Black Elk's Account of the Seven Sacred Rites of the Oglala Sioux* (NY: Penguin Books 1979) xx. Reprint.

Some translations of Black Elk's words might show a Christian influence,[36] but leaving that question aside, it is clear that Lakota religious philosophy, ritual, and ceremonial songs communicate the sacredness of relationality. Black Elk's description of the sweat lodge made for the rite of purification, *Inipi*,[37] conveys the relationality of all the peoples who together form the living world:

> The willows which make the frame of the sweat lodge are set up in such a way that they mark the four quarters of the universe; thus the whole lodge is a universe in image, and the two-legged, four-legged, and winged peoples, and all the things of the world are contained in it, for all these peoples and things too must be purified before they can send a voice to *Wakan Tanka* (the Great Spirit).[38]

One of the seven sared rites, Hunkapi, the Making of Relatives, practiced in earlier centuries, was according to Black Elk received by a holy man called *Matohokšila* (Bear Boy), who prayed thus to Grandmother Earth:

Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1953.

[36] For treatment of problems of interpretation such as elements of Christianity in the Black Elk literature, see Julian Rice, *Black Elk's Story, Distinguishing its Lakota Purpose* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1991).

[37] *Inipi* means 'steaming', 'sweating'. The name of this ceremony derived from the verb *ini*, 'to steam oneself'.

[38] Brown, *The Sacred Pipe*, 32.

> With all beings and all things we shall be as relatives; just as we are related to you, O Mother, so we shall make peace with one another and shall be related to them.[39]

Health in the Lakota view is conceived in terms of well-being that is contingent on inter-relations among the many peoples constituting the living world. The following Purification Ceremony song is one of many Lakota sacred songs invoking relationality:

ṫunk̄an uŋši uŋlap̄i ye yo!	Spirits, have pity on us!
ṫunk̄aŋ uŋši uŋlap̄i ye yo!	Spirits, have pity on us!
He mit̄ak̄uye oh	I shall live
wani kta ċa	with my relatives
lena čic'u welo	so I give you these offerings.[40]

Mitakuye, "my relatives" or "my relations" does not mean only immediate kin; the singers pray for well-being of peoples near and far. Relatives are not only human persons; among them are the powers of the animal nations, the four winds, and the stone-people, whose breath --issuing from the union of rock, fire and water-- vitalizes human breath in the *Inipi* ceremony. I'll say more about breath, in connection with sacred speech and song, in the following essay, offered as an example of inquiry into religious therapeutics.

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[39] Brown, *The Sacred Pipe*, 105.

[40] John Around Him, *Lakota Ceremonial Songs*, trans. Albert White Hat, Sr. (Rosebud Sioux Reservation, Rosebud, SD: Sinte Gleska College, 1983) 16.

SACRED SPEECH AND SONG:
An Instance of Religious Therapeutics

Harold Coward writes that in all world religions, the oral experience of scripture is as important, or more important, than the written:

> The dominance of the written text for contemporary Westerners is partly a result of the impact of modern, print-dominated culture on religious experience. But it is quite out of line with the traditional experience of scripture as found in the world religions and in Native American religious experience. In each tradition the scripture began orally and to varying degrees has remained a basically oral phenomenon.[41]

Not just scripture, but other forms of language are important in religious life: speech, chant and song can all be used in a sacred manner. By *sacred* in this context I mean that language and music are ways of being in contact with what is holy. In this initial inquiry into sacred speech and song, I draw upon some themes emergent in Hindu religious therapeutics to illustrate how one might initiate a comparative analysis of a particular theme. I am inspired[42] by Yoga's presentation of the efficacy of *praṇayama* or control of the breath for establishing meditative consciousness. Yoga also recommends use of *mantra* or sacred sounds, as does Tantra. From Tantra I take the theme of ritual identification of (forces of) self with (forces of) cosmos. Another application of

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[41] Harold G. Coward, "The Spiritual Power of Oral and Written Scripture," in *Silence, the Word and the Sacred*, ed. E.D. Blodgett and H.G. Coward (Waterloo, Ontario, Canada: Wilfred Laurier Press, 1989) 113.

[42] The word *inspiration*, stimulation of feeling or creativity, is derived from the Latin *inspīrare*, "to breathe into."

tantrism in the present context is use of the power of sound as a focal point for meditation, and as a stimulus to the expansion of one's energy and consciousness. From both the classical and tantric articulations of yoga, I take the idea of *sadhana*, devoted practice of a discipline or an art for the sake of spiritual self-cultivation.

Forms of sacred speech and song include chant, and the playing of sacred instrumental music. Discussing chant in the Hindu tradition, Coward explores how the spoken word can "evoke the Divine word of which it is an earthly resonance."

> A direct correspondence is seen as existing between the physical vibrations of the noumenal chant and the noumenal vibrations of the transcendent. The more the physical vibrations of the uttered chant are repeated, the more Transcendent power is evoked in experience until one's consciousness is purified and transformed.[43]

Coward recommends the literature of classical Yoga as a source for understanding the Hindu prescription of *mantra*.[44] The commentator Vacaspati says that repetition and understanding of *Om* is "the means of feeling the presence of the Lord everywhere, in all circumstances and phenomena" (TV 1:28). Another instance of religiously transformative chant is Tibetan overtone chanting. Individual monks chant not single notes, but full chords. Coward writes that chanting "enables the monks to feel the evocation of the

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[43] Coward, "Spiritual Power of Oral and Written Scripture," 126.

[44] See *Yoga-sutras* and commentaries, 1:27-28, 1:42-44, 2:32.

interdependence of the universe-- a meaning that can be said symbolically in the chanted sounds and gestures, but not said explicitly."[45] Tibetan Buddhist overtone chant expresses that things are more than they seem: the higher overtone frequencies are held to stand in the same relation to the extremely low fundamental tone, as spiritual reality stands to the world we think we inhabit.[46]

The force behind sacred speech and song is breath. Air is the constant support of our physical life, and breathing is the fundamental human interaction with the energy of the cosmos. In Navajo philosophy, the word *niłch'i* is translated as "Holy Wind":

> Suffusing all of nature, Holy Wind gives life, thought, speech, and the power of motion to all living things and serves as the means of communication between all elements of the living world.[47]

Health and well-being are central concerns in the Navajo world-view. The term *hózhó* has meanings along the lines of beauty, harmony, order, and well-being. Through ritual, *hózhó* is restored to an individual's being, and through speech and song, *hózhó* is then imposed into his universe, carried by *niłch'i*:

> After a person has projected *hózhó* into the air through ritual form, he then at the conclusion of the ritual, breathes that *hózhó* back into himself

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[45] Coward, "Spiritual Power of Oral and Written Scripture," 127.

[46] Huston Smith, cited in "Chant," National Public Radio Program (cassette recording). University of Hawai'i Sinclair Library Tape #975) 1983.

[47] James K. McNeley, *Holy Wind in Navajo Philosophy* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1981) 1.

and makes himself part of the order, harmony, and beauty he has projected into the world through the ritual mediums of speech and song.[48]

Pacific Northwest teacher and healer Johnny Moses (Whistemenee, Walking Medicine Robe) explains that the Samish word *si'ilh* means 'to sing', 'to pray' and 'to cry'. Moses says of healing ceremonies, "We sing for a person in sorrow to uplift them, to give them energy, to give them life-force."[49] Moses is a storyteller. His stories are engrossing and humorous tales of animal-people and human people in all their giftedness and weakness. These stories are not "lore," they are Teachings; they are one of the means of communicating the philosophy and religion bequeathed by the ancestors. Besides the meanings the stories convey, Moses' kind of storytelling can be understood in terms of religious therapeutics, for the stories perpetuate religious understanding for the well-being of the people. The stories help us, Moses says, "to breathe, to live now." What's more, the enjoyment of hearing the stories is therapeutic-- providing fellowship among the listeners, and laughter that can palpably lighten the burden of worries. Breath has special significance here: the stories carry the breath of the ancestors. Not printed texts, but embodied teachers, healers, singers and storytellers perpetuate knowledge and the

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[48] Gary Witherspoon, *Language and Art in the Navajo Universe* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1977) 61; cited in McNeley, *Holy Wind in Navajo Philosophy*, 58.

[49] Johnny Moses, Medicine Teachings. First Unitarian Church of Honolulu, Honolulu: HI, May 1993.

spirit of life. In India, the public performance of the *Ramayana* exemplifies the religious use of storytelling. Besides the ceremonial recitation of the *Ramayana*, "the retelling of the Rama text goes on constantly in the singing of the folk singers around the village fire in the evening, and by the oral exposition of the text in *katha*, or storytelling style, by scholars."[50]

The human body is the instrument of sacred speech and song. William Powers' study of Lakota sacred language utilizes Levy-Bruhl's idea of "appurtenances" to explore the idea of speech and song as extensions of the body.[51] Sacred music can be vocal or instrumental. Sacred music played on instruments extends song from the human performer so that it resonates, not in the musician's voicebox, but in an object, such as a drum. Fundamental musical instruments (after the human voice) are the drum, the rattle, and the flute. In the Lakota language the names of these instruments show that musical instruments are conceived as extensions of the body: The drum is *waapapi*, 'things struck with the hands', the rattle is *wayuȟlaȟlapi*, 'things rattled with the hands', and the flute is *wayajopi*, 'things played by blowing'.[52] These instruments, made with many designs and materials, have religious and therapeutic uses throughout world cultures.

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[50] Harold Coward, "Scripture in Hinduism," in *Sacred Word and Sacred Text* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1988) 119.

[51] Powers, *Sacred Language*, 6, 46-47.

[52] Powers, *Sacred Language*, 66-67.

The drum for Lakota singers is the heartbeat of Mother Earth. I don't say that the drumbeat *represents* her heartbeat, rather it makes audible the pulses of nature, of which our heartbeats are an instance. Drumming is a discipline that can cultivate a meditative state. It does this by making audible a regular rhythm that is stabilizing to one's heart and other vital rhythms, and one's mental rhythms as well. Stabilization of psychophysical rhythms, as yoga demonstrates, induces meditative states of consciousness. Drumming or listening to drumming can accomplish this in a very powerful and direct way, because the drumbeat is not only heard with the ear, but its vibrations are felt throughout the body. In the social dimension, the drum can have great unifying power for a group of people, be they marching together, dancing, singing, playing music, listening to music or participating in ceremony.

The flute is a more subtle-sounding instrument, but no less powerful. Its medium is breath, the vehicle of *praṇa*, the current of life. The flute, by means of breath, has the sound of the wind and other forces, so its music easily evokes experiencing the unity of self and cosmos. To play the flute requires control of breath, not *praṇayama* as it is practiced for yogic meditation, but with *praṇayama's* property of specially timed inhalation and exhalation, and what's important, *pranyama's* effects: breaking the tendency toward breathing that is thoughtless and erratic. Instead, the breathing is regulated and a meditative state ensues from the quieting of what classical Yoga called the *vṛttis*, the spinning activities of the mind, or what Wallace Black Elk

calls "that electrical storm going on in your head." Ordinary breathing tends to be shallow, but part of the power of *praṇayama* and other breath-disciplines is that in addition to making the breath more even, their deeper breath infuses one spiritually with more *praṇa* and, in chemical terms, with vitalizing oyxgen.

Kevin Locke (Tokeya Inajin), a Lakota musician and instrument maker, says of the flute:

> ...the flute is the essence of the wind, especially *Niya Awicableze*, the Enlightening Breath, the first waft on which the meadowlarks return to the Northern prairies. The flute gives voice to the beauty of the land and is the sound of the wind as it rustles the grasses and leaves, scales the buttes and mountains, or skims the surface of lakes and streams.
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> To send forth the clearest sound the flute must be made with great care and understanding of how the wind-like breath of its user will move invisibly through the flute to draw out a beautiful melody. The music becomes the means of a mysterious unseen communication that flows from one heart to another, one spirit to another.[53]

The flute can sing the sound of the wind in a canyon, and the musician is the locus of the canyon-wind's reinstantiation as sound made by human intelligence, breath, and the instrument he has crafted. Flutes are generally made of plant materials, marking another dimension of the relationality of beings that can be realized through sacred music. The tree that is used to make a flute is not severed from the living creation, but continues to live, not biologically, but as a resonator for the breath of a human being, and a resonator for the voice of the wind. Locke speaks of the sounds of these four prime instruments as

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[53] Tokeya Inajin and Jim Deerhawk, *Dream Catcher* (cassette recording) (Redway, CA: Earthbeat, 1992) liner notes.

vehicles of the life-force, and as means to experience one's identity with the creation and its sacred forces. The religious and therapeutic power of music is conveyed in Locke's likening the music of these instruments to the thunderstorms that allow the prairies to bloom: the drum is the thunder "that shakes the human heart out of its slough of despondency." Flute-songs are "the wind that purifies and breathes life into the human heart." The rattle's sound is the refreshing rain, and the human voice is streaks of lightning that "illuminate the heart and charge it with energy and enlightenment."[54] The power of sacred instrumental music is all the greater if the musician has crafted his own instrument, and experiences the unity of creation in his transforming, for example, part of cedar tree into a flute with a living voice.

Clearly music can be religious; it induces reverent and even meditative states, and it also symbolizes (i.e., participates in and points to) sacred forces. But how is sacred music therapeutic? Rejecting mind-body dualism (and taking 'mind' and 'body' not as designating different entities, but as useful terms to identify two main dimensions of the human entity), entails a theory of etiology or disease causation wherein mental and physical states are considered mutually influential. From this standpoint, mental events have effects in the physical body. For instance, emotional distress causes the activation of neuro-chemicals that over time can compromise vitality and immunity. Therapeutically, mental

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[54] Kevin Locke, in *The Spirit World* [Series: *The American Indians*] (Alexandria, VA: Time-Life Books, 1992) 29.

calm has a healthful effect on the body. Sacred songs serve many functions, and one of them is to calm the mind-body so that well-being can prevail. Deeper appreciation of sacred music as a religious therapeutic is possible if one understands that religious liberation is itself healing. In the context of sacred music, music's healing effects in the psychophysical dimension contribute to religious realization equivalent to fundamental healing of our human condition.

Riley Lee is an ethno-musicologist and master of the *shakuhachi*, a Japanese flute traditionally made of bamboo. Asked about the therapeutic value of playing the *shakuhachi*, Lee joked that his family could dispel the myth that this flute-master lives an entirely serene life. Lee did however, note that playing the instrument has the therapeutic benefits of reciprocally requiring and developing relaxation in three areas of the body that are significant energy-centers, and which tend to accumulate tension: the jaws, the diaphram, and the occipital area where the neck joins the skull. As regards the function of the *shakuhachi* for religious liberation, Lee explained the use of the flute by Zen monks who played it as a bridge to meditative consciousness and liberation, in some cases playing only one song all their lives.[55] Despite Lee's admission that his life can be very hectic, to hear and see him play the *shakuhachi* is to witness a person whose psychophysical integration and vitality allows him to

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[55] Riley Lee, Lecture and performance on the *shakuhachi* flute, East-West Center, Honolulu: HI, October 1993.

play music whose sound is sublime --uplifting to the spirit-- and thus therapeutic and religious.

Among forms of sacred speech and song, sublimity is wonderfully manifest in Sanskrit chant. Like music, Sanskrit uplifts the heart. Vyaas Houston writes:

> Sanskrit is a language designed for maximum uninterrupted resonance. It is language as music, attracting the full attention of the speaker or singer with the articulation of each syllable blending perfectly without the slightest friction into the next syllable.[56]

Sanskrit sounds are combined according to rules of euphonic combination called *saṃdhi* [sam, 'together', $\sqrt{}$*dha* 'to put']. *Saṃdhi* permits "the most perfect uninterrupted flow of the most euphonic blending of letters into words and verse." For instance, the greeting *Namah te*, "Salutations to thee," becomes *Namaste*; the sounds are blended to maintain a current of resonance. This is a small example, but in the chanting of Sanskrit scripture or of *mantras*, the experience of unbroken resonation pervades one's entire body and extends beyond oneself.[57] To send forth one's voice, and feel its vibration join the vibrations of the world outside oneself, can be a direct and marvelous experience of primordial unity. The *saṃdhi* rules serve purposes of efficiency and aesthetics in both oral and written Sanskrit, but *saṃdhi's* greatest

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[56] Vyaas Houston, "The Yoga of Learning Sanskrit," in *Devavaṇī: Sanskrit, Sacred Language and Self Knowledge* (Warwick, NY: 1993) 18.

[57] Houston, "Sanskrit - Planetary Language?" in *Devavaṇī*, 10.

importance is the power it gives Sanskrit as a vehicle of inducing meditative consciousness and higher knowledge. Other features of Sanskrit also serve this purpose, an essential feature is the purity of Sanskrit's basic sounds, described by Houston as "a coherent selection of the most pure, distinct, and focused sounds that can be made by the human vocal instrument."[58]

The breath-patterns evoked in chanting is another feature of Sanskrit that supports meditative awareness. For instance, the arrangement of the consonants in the Sanskrit alphabet is based in part on alternation of aspirated and unaspirated sounds, such as *ta* and *tha*. According to the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, pronunciation requires attention to sound, accent, quantity, force, articulation and combination.[59] Correct pronunciation both requires and cultivates breath-control, and thus chant, like the playing of the flute, has qualities like those of *praṇayama*; regulation of breath leads to calming of the *vṛttis*, the activities of mind that produce bondage and suffering. Meditative awareness gained in Sanskrit chant is thus rooted in the physical experience of vocal sound-resonation, control of breath, and the one-pointed concentration required to produce the sounds comprising the *mantra* or verse being chanted. For someone who is learning Sanskrit, acute attention to locating the precise point of articulation of a sound (e.g., guttural, in the throat, or labial, at the lips),

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[58] Vyaas Houston, "Sanskrit as Spiritual Practice," *Yoga International* (May/June 1992) 30-35). In *Devavaṇī*, 50.

[59] *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, 1:2.

along with attunement to the correct use of breath to produce the sound, counters fragmentation of consciousness, and helps one develop the one-pointedness of mind prescribed by Yoga.

The somatic and aesthetic dimensions of Sanskrit exemplify the soteriological role of the body in sacred language. We ordinarily think of language as a cognitive phenomenon, and regard the physical articulation of speech as incidental to the communication of meaning. Certainly language exists to convey meaning, but the meanings in the Sanskrit's awesome body of literature are carried by currents of sound with amazing beauty, and power to modify states of consciousness. Mental concentration on Sanskrit verses, and the resonation of their sound with one's own body as its instrument, can be an experience of the highest order of enjoyment, a therapeutic that utilizes human physicality in a sublime way.

Coward writes that in the Hindu view of language, it is the "vibrating" spoken word that has power; words are manifestations of the Divine.[60] Chant issues from a material source-- the human body/mind, but while the resonation of the chanting voice is physical, *it is not material*; thus it provides direct experience of the reality of the spiritual. The cantor's voice continues out from him into the atmosphere, creating a field of sound that joins with the field of vibration in which all participates. Sacred language transforms consciousness, and one way this happens is that in chanting, the vibrations of sound return to

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[60] Coward, "Hindu Scripture," 116.

the cantor, and egoism is destroyed with his awareness, not that he is chanting, but that he is an instrument resonating the song of that which is sacred. In his attunement, the cantor can be as an unstruck drum, resonating in concert with the musical vibrations surrounding it.

COMMUNITY:
A Further Dimension of Religious Therapeutics

This preliminary study of religious therapeutics in Hindu and world traditions leads me to add *community* to the dimensions of religious therapeutics thus far suggested. *Community* as a branch of religious therapeutics has application in the domains of ecology, human social life, and religion. In terms of religiousness, community refers to participation in, or contact with, that which is sacred. The word community derives from the Latin *communis*, 'common', which connotes shared interests. The Indo-European root of 'common' and 'community' is $\sqrt{}$*mei*, 'to change', 'to go', 'to move'. Derivatives of the root *mei* refer to the exchange of goods and services. *Mei*, and its derivative 'common', also produce the word 'communication', pertaining to the transmission of information or meaning. In context of religious therapeutics, communication incorporates sacred speech and song, which are vehicles of both communicating with the sacred, and of conveying within the human community the means of getting in contact with the sacred.

Community embodies the meaning of relationality among persons and among the aspects of creation. Classical Yoga aims for the transcendence of

material nature, and although it provides an extensive system of religious therapeutics, it neglects relationality, for its goal is *kaivalya*, 'isolation', i.e., isolation of one's true nature as consciousness from entanglement in material nature, including the body. Tantra holds material nature as sacred, thus grounding the valuation of relationality, and among Indian traditions, Āyurveda gives the most attention to the significance of the bio-physical environment, as illustrated by Āyurveda's view of pharmacology.

Pharmacology is a major branch of both Āyurveda and contemporary scientific medicine, and the Āyurvedic view of pharmacology exemplifies Āyurveda's ethos of bio-spiritual community. Plants, which provide food and medicine, are integral within Hindu religious cosmology.

> The essence of things here is the earth.
> The essence of the earth is water.
> The essence of water is plants.
> The essence of plants is a person (*puruṣa*).
> Chand. Up. 1:1.2

Agni or "fire," the tranformative energy of the life process, exists not just in the human being but throughout living nature. In the plant kingdom, photosynthesis is one of *agni's* manifestations. The plants we consume as food and medicine transmit *agni* to us. When digestive *agni* is strong, food affords maximal nourishment, but when *agni* is weak, compromised digestion can contribute to disease. Plants in Āyurvedic pharmacology and dietetics have both medical and religious significance:

> Herbs can transmit that *agni* to us, their capacity to digest and transform, and this may augment our own power of digestion, or give us

> the capacity to digest substances we normally cannot. The *agni* of plants can feed our *agni*. Through this interconnection, we join ourselves with the cosmic *agni*, the creative force of life and healing.[61]

Frawley and Lad invoke the upanisadic view quoted above in examining connections between plant medicines and *mantras*. Both regulate *prana*: similar to a *mantra's* transmitting the seed-energies of consciousness into the mind, medicinal plants transmit the seed-energies of nature into the body to restore well-being.

The importance of community --ecological, social and spiritual-- for religious therapeutics can be informed by traditions such as Buddhism, and that of the Lakota. The religious potential of human relationality with nature emerges in Kalupahana's examination of the Buddhist understanding of freedom or *nirvana* in terms of health or ease (*sukha*). Freedom is attainable by overcoming egoism, so that passion, hatred and confusion can be eliminated. The gaining of knowledge that destroys egoism can be supported by "living in surroundings where one can realize the interdependence of human life and nature."[62] Kalupahana mentions that natural surroundings --the forest grove, the empty abode-- provide a retreat from "the attractions and repulsions generated by artificial forms of life." Physical and mental health are better sustained in unpolluted, natural environments, thus early Buddhist *aramas* or monasteries

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[61] David Frawley and Vasant Lad, *The Yoga of Herbs, An Āyurvedic Guide to Herbal Medicine* (Santa Fe, NM: Lotus Press, 1986) 21-22.

[62] Kalupahana, "Buddhism and Healing," 12.

were generally simple residences surrounded by woods or orchards.[63] Beyond nature's serving the purpose of human well-being, the natural world itself possesses Buddhahood, according to some Chinese and Japanese Buddhists. William R. LaFleur investigates the soteriological role of nature according to the 12th century Buddhist monk Saigyō, whose use of natural "images" in his poetry, serves to "create a union of the subject and the real object of his image-ing, that is, the Reality itself."[64] Kukai (8th/9th C.), founder of Japan's Shingon school of Buddhism, explains the Buddhahood of plants:

> The *Dharmakaya* consists of the Five Great Elements within which space and plants-and-trees [*sōmoku*] are included. Both this space and these plants-and-trees are the *dharmakaya*. Even though with the physical eye one might see the coarse form of plants-and-trees, it is with the subtle eye that the subtle color can be seen. Therefore, without any alteration in what is in itself, trees-and-plants may, unobjectionably, be referred to as [having] Buddha [-nature].[65]

Kukai, according to LaFleur, posits the identity of the Buddhist Absolute, the *dharmakaya* (body of the *dharma*) "with all forms and things in the

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[63] Kalupahana, "Buddhism and Healing," 13.

[64] William R. LaFleur, "Saigyō and the Buddhist Value of Nature" in *Nature in Asian Traditions of Thought: Essays in Environmental Philosophy*, ed. J. Baird Callicott and Roger T. Ames (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989) 183-209.

[65] Kukai, *Kōbō Daishi Zenshu*, ed. Mikkyō Bunka Kenkyujō (Tokyo, 1964) 2:37; cited in LaFleur, "Saigyō and the Buddhist Value of Nature," 186-87.

phenomenal, mundane world."[66] For Kukai and Saigyō, concrete phenomena in nature have a soteriological function, at once symbolizing and participating in the Absolute.

Plants are one of the four basic elements in Lakota metaphysics as explained by Wallace H. Black Elk. The four elements are fire, water, rock and green. *Green* refers to the plants that Grandmother Earth grows out of her body. Black Elk describes being in the woods, experiencing the plants breathing and communicating among one another. "I am part of it" he says, so there's a chemical language. I was happy there knowing I was related to them."[67] Black Elk is conversant with the discourse of Western disciplines, in which he identifies the "scientific, legal, psychological, and religious languages." Here he uses the word *chemical* to communicate something of how living plants exchange life-force with other participants in the web of life.

Ecologically, community pertains to the relations among all the entities that comprise nature. Life and health in biological terms (for the person as "the body of food," in Hindu terms) depend on the nourishment extracted from other life-forms within the food-chain. In human social life, health and healing depend in part on relations with others. In this connection, Kalupahana says that early Buddhism did not seek to "enable a person to attain spiritual health

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[66] LaFleur, "Saigyō and the Buddhist Value of Nature," 187.

[67] Wallace H. Black Elk, Talks at Church of the Crossroads, Honolulu, HI: March, 1993.

and not be part of this world..." The disease of suffering, caused by craving, is not merely an individual, psychological matter; elimination of craving requires reforms at the level of community:

> It involves a complete change in ideology, whether it be in economics, sociology, politics or morals. It is freedom or *nirvana* not in a world that transcends the world of experience, but one in which the individual and society enjoy the best of health and happiness.[68]

Recall that the Buddha identified malnutrition as a disease, and as a cause of the root disease, suffering. Physical malnutrition is a prime threat to health, and was identified by the Buddha as destructive of the moral fabric of society. Thus individuals' having adequate means of earning a living is foundational to the health of individual and society.[69]

Health influences and is influenced by community. Health is not just a matter of one's own systems functioning well within oneself; health requires that entities and systems throughout a community of beings participate in mutually helpful exchanges. Besides the fact that health is contingent on community in terms of factors such as food-supply, the healing process itself requires community, but community conceived more broadly than human social community. To request healing is to appeal to a source outside oneself to help restore well-being. In saying this I do not deny the innate power of self-healing. In fact, healing must ultimately be generated from within oneself, but

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[68] Kalupahana, "Buddhism and Healing," 15-16.

[69] Kalupahana, "Buddhism and Healing," 14.

its instigation may come from a source that somehow redirects or infuses energy to permit the re-establishment of integrity in the affected system.

The request for healing may be made of such sources as a medical practitioner, a religious practitioner, a human community, a deity, or a tradition, such as Yoga. Earlier I argued that identity is an integral determinant of health: Part of what it means to be in health is to have the aspects of oneself functioning in a sufficiently integrated way, so that one can participate in experiences that manifest and sustain one's self-nature. Identity is found in community. To have knowledge of and actualization of one's self-nature means to establish one's identity in relation to something. The relation may be conceived in the terms "I am not that," or, as embodied in the upaniṣadic statement of the relation of the individual self or *Ātman* with the one Brahman: *Tat tvam asi*, "That am I." In classical Yoga, the ultimate healing that is liberation is establishment in one's self-nature as consciousness. This means locating one's identity in *puruṣa*, consciousness, and recognizing that one is not of the nature of *prakṛti*, matter. In Tantra, self-nature would be realized in terms of identity with nature and the divine. Lakota religion, as another example, suggests the realization of self-identity in terms of *relatedness* with the natural world and sacred forces.

Far from being the "absence of disease," health is life's natural tendency. Order and well-being are not just prevailing properties of life, they are warp and woof. Nature's tendency is toward thriving-- adaptation, equilibrium, and

development. In the religious domain, the human being in its true nature is whole and well, needing only the healing which removes the excrescences that obscure its perfect nature. The fact that health is fundamental is evident in the miraculous fact that most of the time, we don't get sick, despite the fact that we continually come in contact with infective agents and other threats: physical, biological, and psychological. When we are sick or injured, healing means restoration of original order and well-being. A leg gets broken. Before the break was the reality of two good legs. Medical treatment can restore that broken leg, recreate its real nature, re-establish its identity as *my* leg, and my identity as one who walks.

To request healing is to affirm health as fundamental to our nature. *To recognize that we need healing*, whether for physical conditions, or in religious terms, for our human limitations and sufferings, *presupposes the order and well-being of life*. To heal is to recover primordial unity, the non-fragmented state where aspects of self are operating in community, and the person participates in community with other beings in the bio-physical and social environment, and with the forces of the sacred, however conceived. Community designates webs formed of many kinds of participation and interaction among the constituents of life. Human life depends on community, grounded in interaction and communication. The provinces of community encompass the assimilation of oxygen and nourishment, companionship and love

between persons, management of institutions for social welfare, and in the domain of religiousness, fulfilling one's relation with that which is sacred.

Whether the body is conceived as different from the person's true nature, and to be transcended along with the rest of material nature, as classical Yoga holds, or whether body is considered part of the sacred creation and integral to religious life, body remains essential to religious communication. Communication can be accomplished by language, both oral and textual, but in a large share of religious communication, the body is indispensable. Sacred language and songs, and practices such as yoga's *asana*, *praṇayama* and meditation techniques are formalized means of contacting the transcendent, of realizing one's sacred self-nature. The performance of formalized means of religious communication requires the body, and their transmission depends on a living teacher, one who has mastered them, not just cognitively, but who carries the knowledge of their proper use in her or his psychophysical self.

One's religious aim might be transcendence of the body, or religious realization in one's embodied nature, but in either case, our journey in this world is an embodied one, and religious life demands our reconciling in some way the dimensions of sacredness and physicality. The larger share of humanity is not inclined toward ascetic life; therefore it is valuable to articulate connections of religiousness and healthful living that utilize and support wholesome physicality. All our activities --in householding, work, relationship, social welfare, recreation, the arts, and so on-- can be performed in a spirit

that affirms wholeness and holiness. Yoga, Tantra, Āyurveda, and other world traditions contribute an array of approaches to this end.

A major theme emergent in this study is *yoking* in its many connotations of integrating and unifying. Exploration of religion and medicine spanned themes including sacred song, and humans' relationships with plants. In the spirit of honoring relationality within the many domains of life embraced by religious therapeutics, I'll close with some verses from the *Upaniṣads*:

> *Om*! One should reverence the Udgītha (song) as this syllable, for one sings the loud chant beginning with '*Om*'.
>
> The essence of things here is the earth.
> The essence of earth is water.
> The essence of water is plants.
> The essence of plants is a person.
> The essence of a person is speech.
> The essence of speech is the Ṛg ('hymn')
> The essence of the Ṛg is the Saman ('chant').
> The essence of the Saman is the Udgītha.
>
> The Ṛg is speech.
> The Saman is breath.
> The Udgītha is this syllable *Om*.[70]

> *Om*! --This syllable is the whole world...
> ...*Om* is the Self indeed...[71]

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[70] *Chandogya Upaniṣad* 1:1.2,5

[71] *Mandukya Upaniṣad* 1,12

APPENDIX

The Yoga-sutras of Patañjali

Symbols

Parentheses: ( ) enclose terms translated from Sanskrit to English, or from English to Sanskrit.

Square brackets: [ ] enclose explanatory information.

Section I
Samadhi: **Absorption**

Yoga's nature and purpose

i.1 **Atha Yoganuśasanam.**

Now, an exposition of Yoga.

i.2 **Yogaś citta-vṛtti-nirodhaḥ.**

Yoga is the stoppage of the mind's modifications (*vṛttis*).

i.3 **Tada draṣṭuḥ svarupe'vasthanam.**

Then the Seer (*draṣṭa*) is established in his own nature.

i.4 **Vṛtti-sarupyam itaratra.**

In other states the Seer identifies with the mind's modifications.

The five kinds of modifications of mind (*vrttis*)

i.5 **Vṛttayaḥ pañcatayyaḥ kliṣṭākliṣṭaḥ.**

The *vṛttis* are five-fold, and are painful or non-painful.

i.6 **Pramaṇa-viparyaya vikalpa-nidra-smṛtayaḥ.**

The *vṛttis* are right knowledge, wrong knowledge, mental construction, sleep, and memory.

i.7 **Pratyakṣanumanagamaḥ pramaṇani.**

Sources of right knowledge are perception, inference, and reliable authority [spoken or written].

i.8 **Viparyayo mithya-jñanam atad-rupa-pratiṣṭham.**

Wrong knowledge is an erroneous conception of something as possessing a form not its own.

i.9 **Śabda-jñananupatī-vastu-śunyo vikalpaḥ.**

Mental construction is knowledge based on words without corresponding reality [e.g., imagination and logical constructions].

i.10 **Abhava-pratyayalambana vṛttir nidra.**

Sleep is the *vṛtti* based on the absence of mental contents.

i.11 **Anubhuta-viṣayasampramoṣaḥ smṛtiḥ.**

Memory is not allowing the escape of experienced objects-of-mind.

Restraint of the *vrttis*: *Abhyasa* (effort) and *vairagya* (non-attachment)

i.12 **Abhyasa-vairagyabhyaṃ tan-nirodhaḥ.**

The stoppage of mental modifications is brought about by persistent effort (*abhyasa*) and non-attachment (*vairagya*).

i.13 **Tatra sthitau yatno'bhyasaḥ.**

Of the two, *abhyasa* is the effort for establishment in the state of stoppage of the mind's activities *(citta-vṛtti-nirodhaḥ)*.

i.14 **Sa tu dīrgha-kala-nairantarya-satkarasevito dṛḍha-bhumiḥ.**

Abhyasa becomes firmly grounded when continued with devotion for a long time without interruption.

i.15 **Dṛṣṭanuśravika-viṣaya-vitṛṣṇasya vaśīkara-saṃjñam vairagyam.**

Vairagya or non-attachment is the perfect conquest of desires on the part of one who is free from thirst for perceptible or scriptural objects.

i.16 **Tat paraṃ puruṣa-khyater guṇavaitṛṣṇyam.**

That *vairagya* is highest wherein due to discernment of the *puruṣa*, there is no thirst for the *guṇas* [i.e., no thirst for objects, which are formed of *guṇas*, the 3 basic constituents of matter].

SAMĀDHI: Meditative Absorption
Samadhi with support (*saṃprajñata samadhi*) and
samadhi without support (*asaṃprajñata samadhi*)

i.17 **Vitarka-vicaranandasmitanugamat saṃprajñataḥ.**

Saṃprajñata samadhi [wherein *samadhi* is supported by concentration on objects] is accompanied by reasoning [about objects at their gross level], reflection [about objects at their subtle level], bliss, and sense-of-self.

i.18 **Virama-pratyayabhyasa-purvaḥ saṃskara-śeṣo'nyaḥ.**

Asaṃprajñata samadhi [wherein the objective reference is virtually transcended] is that in which only the residual impressions (*saṃskaras*) are left in the mind, preceded by the cessation of contents-of-the-mind (*pratyayas*).

Approaches to *samadhi*

i.19 **Bhava-pratyayo videha-prakṛtilayanam.**

Asaṃprajñata samadhi is caused by birth [worldly existence] for those who are bodiless (divine beings called *videhas*), or those re-merged in *prakṛti* (the *prakṛtilayas*).

i.20 **Śraddha-vīrya-smṛti-samadhi-prajñapurvaka itareṣam.**

For others [i.e., yogins] *asaṃprajñata samadhi* is preceded by faith, energy, memory, *samadhi* and higher knowledge (*prajña*).

i.21 **Tīvra-saṃveganam asannaḥ.**

Samadhi is close by for those who are intensely earnest.

i.22 **Mṛdu-madhyadhimatratvat tato'pi viśeṣaḥ.**

There is also differentiation according to whether the intensity is mild, moderate or extreme.

i.23 **Iśvara-praṇidhanad va.**

Or *samadhi* is attained by resignation to Lord Iśvara (*Iśvara-praṇidhana*).

Iśvara or God

1.24 **Kleśa-karma-vipakaśayair aparamṛṣṭaḥ puruṣa-viśeṣa Iśvaraḥ.**

Iśvara is a special *puruṣa*, untouched by the afflictions (*kleśas*), action (*karma)*, fruition of *karmas* and their residue.

i.25 **Tatra niratiśayaṃ sarvajña-bījam.**

In Him the seed of omniscience is unsurpassed.

i.26 **Sa purveṣam api guruḥ kalenana-vacchedat.**

He is the preceptor even of the ancient preceptors, being unlimited by time.

The sacred word or *pranava*, Om

i.27 **Tasya vacakaḥ praṇavaḥ.**

Iśvara's designator is the *praṇava*: the sacred sound, *Om*.

i.28 **Tajjapas tad-artha-bhavanam.**

Om's repetition (*japa*), and contemplation of its meaning [which represents Iśvara], is recommended.

Removing the obstacles (*antarayaḥ*)

i.29 **Tataḥ pratyak-cetanadhigamo'py antaraya-bhavaś ca.**

From that is attained introspective intelligence, and the elimination of obstacles.

i.30 **Vyadhi-styana-saṃśaya-pramadalasya-virati-bhranti-darśanalabdhabhumi-katvanavasthitatvani citta-vikṣepas te'ntarayaḥ.**

The obstacles are: Illness, mental languor, doubt, carelessness, physical and mental laziness, lack of detachment, erroneous views, failure to attain a stage of *samadhi*, and instability in maintaining an achieved stage.

i.31 **Duḥkha-daurmanasyaṅgamejayatva-śvasa-praśvasa vikṣepa-sahabhuvaḥ.**

The distractions (*vikṣepas*) [symptoms of a mind distracted by obstacles] are: suffering or mental distress (*duḥkha*), despair, unsteadiness of the limbs or body, and unsteady inspiration and expiration.

i.32 **Tat-pratiṣedhartham eka-tattvabhyasaḥ.**

For their remedy, there should be practice of a single principle [rather than the mind's fragmentation in several directions].

Attaining steadiness of mind

i.33 **Maitrī-karuṇa-muditopekṣaṇaṃ sukha-duḥkha-puṇyapuṇya-viṣayaṇaṃ bhavanataś citta-prasadanam.**

The mind is clarified by cultivating friendliness toward those who have happiness, compassion toward misery, gladness toward virtue, and indifference toward vice.

i.34 **Pracchardana-vidharaṇabhyaṃ va praṇasya.**

Or steadiness of the mind is attained by the expulsion and retention of the breath.

i.35 **Viṣayavatī va pravṛttir utpanna manasaḥ sthiti-nibandhanī.**

Or, the arising of higher sense-activity is a binder of steadiness of the mind.

i.36 **Viśoka va jyotiṣmatī.**

Or steadiness of the mind is attained by sorrowless and luminous states of higher sense-activity.

i.37 **Vīta-raga-viṣayaṃ va cittam.**

Or the mind attains steadiness by having as its object those who are free from passion.

i.38 **Svapna-nidra-jñanalambanaṃ va.**

Or the mind attains steadiness by having for its support knowledge of dream or sleep.

i.39 **Yathabhimata-dhyanad va.**

Or the mind attains steadiness by meditation on an object of one's choice.

i.40 **Paramaṇu-parama-mahattvanto'sya vaśikaraḥ.**

The yogin's mastery extends from the minutest particle to the greatest magnitude.

i.41 **Kṣīṇa-vṛtter abhijatasyeva maṇer grahītṛ-grahaṇa-grahyeṣu tatstha-tadañjanata samapattiḥ.**

For one whose mental modifications are nearly destroyed, there is coalescence (*samapatti*) of the knower, the knowing, and the known, as a transparent crystal takes the color of that on which it rests.

Sabīja samadhi: Samadhi "with seed" (with potent *saṃskaras*)

Vitarka samapatti (coalescence of mind and object, using reasoning)

i.42 **Tatra śabdartha-jñana-vikalpaiḥ saṃkīrṇa savitarka.**

In *savitarka samapatti* [i.e., coalescence using language and reasoning about gross elements of objects] the sound of a word, knowledge of its real meaning, and ordinary knowledge of associated ideas are confused with one another, and the mind alternates between them.

i.43 **Smṛti-pariśuddhau svarupa-śunyevartha-matra-nirbhasa nirvitarka.**

In *nirvitarka samadhi* [i.e., coalescence with the gross elements of objects without using language and reasoning], the memory is purified and the mind is empty of its own nature, as it were, and the object alone shines forth.

Vicara samapatti (coalescence using discriminative reflection)

i.44 **Etayaiva savicara nirvicara ca sukṣma-viṣaya vyakhyata.**

This [sutras i.42-43] also explains *savicara* (coalescence using discriminative reflection) and *nirvicara* (coalescence without discriminative reflection), which have for their object the subtle elements [rather than the gross elements of objects].

i.45 **Suksma-visayatvam calinga-paryavasanam.**

The province having the subtle as its object [i.e., *vicara sampatti*] extends up to the undifferentiated *(alinga)* state of the *gunas*.

[When consciousness coalesces with the subtle elements of nature, knowledge of differentiating characteristics of *prakrti* is transcended.]

i.46 **Ta eva sabijah samadhih.**

Only these four kinds of *samapatti* are *samadhi* "with seed" (*sabija samadhi*), i.e., *samadhi* with viable subliminal impressions (*samskaras*) that produce mental activity.

Truth-bearing higher knowledge *(rtamabhara prajña)*

i.47 **Nirvicara vaiśaradye'dhyatma-prasadah.**

On attaining clarity of *nivicara samapatti*, luminosity proceeds from the spiritual Self.

i.48 **Rtambhara tatra prajña.**

In *nivicara samadhi* there is truth-bearing higher knowledge.

i.49 **Śrutanumana-prajñabhyam anya-visaya viśesarthatvat.**

Higher knowledge (*prajña*) is different from knowledge based on inference or reliable authority, because it has particulars as its object.

[Gross objects are "general," but *purusas* and the infinitesimal constituents comprising the inner nature of objects are the particulars cognized by truth-bearing higher knowledge].

The residual impressions (*saṃskaras*)
in *sabīja samadhi* and *nirbīja samadhi*

i.50 **Taj-jaḥ saṃskaro 'nya-saṃskara-prati-bandhī.**

The *saṃskaras* [residual impressions of experience, which cause mental activity] produced by *sabīja samadhi* impede other *saṃskaras*.

i.51 **Tasyapi nirodhe sarva-nirodhan nirbījaḥ samadhiḥ.**

Nirbīja samadhi (seedless *samadhi*) is attained when even the production of *saṃskaras* in *samadhi* is suppressed, since all is supressed.

Section II
Sadhana: Practice

Preliminary or kriya-yoga

ii.1 **Tapaḥ-svadhyayeśvara-praṇidhanani kriya-yogaḥ.**

Preliminary yoga (*kriya-yoga*) consists of purification (*tapas*), self-education (*svadhyaya*), and resignation to God (*Īśvara-praṇidhana*).

ii.2 **Samadhi-bhavanarthaḥ kleśa-tanukaranarthaś ca.**

Kriya yoga is for weakening the afflictions (*kleśas*) and bringing about *samadhi*.

The five afflictions (*kleśas*)

ii.3 **Avidyasmita-raga-dveṣabhiniveśaḥ kleśaḥ.**

The afflictions are ignorance (*avidya*), egoism (*asmita*), attraction (*raga*), aversion (*dveṣa*), and clinging to life / aversion to death (*abhiniveśa*).

ii.4 **Avidya kṣetram uttareṣa prasupta-tanu-vicchinnodaraṇam.**

Ignorance is the field of the other afflictions, whether they are dormant, attenuated, alternating, or fully operative.

ii.5 **Anityaśuciduḥkhanatmasu nitya-śuci-sukhatmakhyatir avidya.**

Ignorance is taking the non-eternal as the eternal, the impure as the pure, suffering as happiness, and the non-Self to be the Self.

ii.6 **Dṛg-darśana-śaktyor ekatmatevasmita.**

Egoism is identifying the power of seeing (*dṛg*, i.e., the Seer or *puruṣa*) with the power of showing or cognition (*darśana*, i.e., the *buddhi* or one who shows).

ii.7 **Sukhanuśayī ragaḥ.**

Attraction accompanies happiness (*sukha*).

ii.8 **Dukhanuśayī dveṣaḥ.**

Aversion accompanies suffering (*duḥkha*).

ii.9 **Svarasavahī viduṣo' pi tatha rudho 'bhiniveśaḥ.**

Clinging to life / aversion to death, carried by its own potency, is established even in the wise.

Elimination of the afflictions (*kleśas*)

ii.10 **Te pratiprasava-heyaḥ sukṣmaḥ.**

These afflictions, reduced to subtle form [i.e., potential form], are destroyed through the counter-process of involution of *prakṛti*.

[In the involution of *prakṛti*, the mind passes back into its cause, which is egoism, and the power of the afflictions is eradicated with the mind's resolution into its origin].

ii.11 **Dhyana-heyas tad-vṛttayaḥ.**

The afflictions' active modifications are eliminated through meditation (*dhyana*).

<u>The principle of action (*karma*)</u>

ii.12 **Kleśa-mulaḥ karmaśayo dṛṣṭadṛṣṭa-janma-vedanīyaḥ.**

The vehicle of actions (*karmas*), rooted in the afflictions (*kleśas*), produce experiences in present and future lives.

ii.13 **Sati mule tad-vipako jaty-ayur-bhogaḥ.**

If the root of the afflictions persists, it ripens into various life-forms, life-spans, and life-experiences.

ii.14 **Te hlada-paritapa-phalaḥ puṇyapuṇya-hetutvat.**

The life-forms, -spans, and -experiences have the fruits of joy and sorrow according to whether their cause is virtue or vice.

<u>Diagnosis of the human condition</u>

ii.15 **Pariṇama-tapa-saṃskara-duḥkhair guṇa-vṛtti-virodhac ca duḥkham eva sarvaṃ vivekinaḥ.**

All is suffering to discriminating persons, because of pain resulting from change, anxiety, subliminal impressions (*saṃskaras*), and because of opposition between the mind's modifications (*vṛttis*) and the basic constituents of matter (*guṇas*).

ii.16 **Heyaṃ duḥkham anagatam.**

Suffering not-yet-come is destructible.

The cause of suffering:
the conjunction of materiality (*prakṛti*) and consciousness (*puruṣa*)

ii.17 **Draṣṭṛ-dṛśyayoḥ saṃyogo heya-hetuḥ.**

The cause of suffering is the conjunction of Seer (*puruṣa*) and Seen *prakṛti*).

ii.18 **Prakaśa-kriya-sthiti-śīlaṃ bhutendriyatmakaṃ bhogapavargarthaṃ dṛśyam.**

The Seen has the nature of illumination (*sattva*), activity (*rajas*), and inertia (*tamas*). It consists of the elements (*bhutas*) and sensory-faculties (*indrīyas*). The purpose of the Seen is to provide the Seer with experience and emancipation.

ii.19 **Viśeṣaviśa-liṅgamatraliṅgani guṇa-parvaṇi.**

The four stages of the constituents or "strands" of matter (*guṇas*) are the particular, the universal, the differentiated, and the undifferentiated.

ii.20 **Draṣṭa dṛśimatraḥ śuddho 'pi pratyayanupaśyaḥ.**

The Seer is consciousness only. Even though pure, it cognizes by reflecting or imitating the contents of the mind.

ii.21 **Tad-artha eva dṛśyasyatma.**

The existence of the Seen is only for the Seer's sake.

ii.22 **Kṛtarthaṃ prati naṣṭam apy anaṣṭaṃ tad-anya sadharaṇatvat.**

Although *prakṛti* is destroyed for one whose purpose is achieved, it is not entirely destroyed, because it is common to others.

ii.23 **Sva-svami-śaktyoḥ svarupopalabdhi-hetuḥ saṃyogaḥ.**

The purpose of the conjunction (*saṃyogaḥ*) of the owned [*prakṛti*: materiality] and the owner [*puruṣa*: consciousness], is the *puruṣa's* recognition of the self-natures of the two powers.

ii.24 **Tasya hetur avidya.**

The cause of the conjunction of materiality and consciousness is ignorance [i.e., *purusa's* ignorance of its own real nature].

The remedy

ii.25 **Tad-abhavat samyogabhavo hanam tad drśeh kaivalyam.**

By elimination of ignorance, the conjunction of materiality and consciousness is eliminated, and this is liberation of the Seer.

ii.26 **Viveka-khyatir aviplava hanopayah.**

The means of this elimination is unwavering discriminative knowledge (*viveka-khyati*).

ii.27 **Tasya saptadha pranta-bhumih prajña.**

For one who develops discriminative knowledge, higher knowledge or wisdom (*prajña*) is reached by seven stages.

The eight limbs of Yoga

ii.28 **Yogañganusthanad aśuddhi-ksaye jñana diptir a viveka-khyateh.**

By practice of the limbs of Yoga, on the destruction of impurity, higher knowledge (*jñana*) shines forth, reaching up to discriminative knowing (*viveka-khyati*).

ii.29 **Yama-niyamasana-pranayama-pratyahara-dharana-dhyana-samadhayo'stav-angani.**

Yoga's eight limbs (*angas*) are: Restraints (*yama*), commitments (*niyama*), postures (*asana*), regulation of breath and vital energy (*pranayama*), withdrawal of the senses (*pratyahara*), concentration (*dharana*), meditation (*dhyana*) and meditative absorption (*samadhi*).

1st limb: The five self-restraints (*yamas*)

ii.30 **Ahiṃsa-satyasteya-brahmacaryaparigraha yamaḥ.**

The yamas are abstinence from injury (*ahiṃsa*), from falsehood (*satya*), from stealing and misappropriation (*asteya*), from sensuality (*brahmacarya*), and from acquisitiveness and possessiveness (*aparigraha*).

ii.31 **Jati-deśa-kala-samayanavacchinaḥ sarvabhauma maha-vratam.**

These five restraints constitute the Great Vow, universal and not qualified by birth-state, place, time, or circumstance.

2nd limb: The five commitments (*niyamas*)

ii.32 **Śauca-saṃtoṣa-tapaḥ-svadhyayeśvarapraṇidhanani niyamaḥ.**

The commitments are: cleanliness (*śauca*), contentment (*saṃtoṣa*), austerities or purifications (*tapas*), spiritual self-education (*svadhyaya*), and devotion to Iśvara (*Iśvara-praṇidhana*).

Applications and results of the self-restraints

ii.33 **Vitarka-badhane-pratipakṣa-bhavanaṃ.**

Disturbed by perverse thoughts, one should dwell on their opposites.

ii.34 **Vitarka hiṃsadayaḥ kṛta-karitanumodita lobdha-krodha-moha-purvaka mṛdu-madhyadhimatra duḥkhajñanananta-phala iti pratipakṣa-bhavanam.**

Perverse thoughts, such as those of injury and so on, whether done, caused to be done, or abetted; whether caused by greed, anger, or confusion; and whether mild, moderate, or intense; result in endless ignorance and suffering. Thus one must dwell upon their opposites.

ii.35 **Ahiṃsa-pratiṣṭhayaṃ tat-saṃnidhau vairatyagaḥ.**

In the presence of one who is established in non-injury, all living beings abandon hostility.

ii.36 **Satya-pratiṣṭhayaṃ kṛiya-phalaśrayatvam.**

On establishment in truthfulness, the fruit of action results from one's action [i.e., one's act of speech produces the coming-to-be of what one has said].

ii.37 **Asteya-pratiṣṭayaṃ sarva-ratnopasthanam.**

On establishment in non-misappropriation, all kinds of gems present themselves.

ii.38 **Brahmacarya-pratiṣṭhayaṃ vīrya-labhaḥ.**

On establishment in non-sensuality, vigor is attained.

ii.39 **Aparigraha-sthairye janma-kathaṃta-saṃbodhaḥ.**

On establishment of non-acquisitiveness, one attains knowledge of the how and why of one's existence in the past, present and future.

Results of the commitments

ii.40 **Śaucat svaṅga-jugupsa parair asaṃsargaḥ.**

From cleanliness: disgust for one's body and disinclination toward contact with others.

ii.41 **Sattvaśuddhi-saumanasyaikagryendriya-jayatma-darśana-yogyatvani ca.**

From purity of mind comes cheerfulness, one-pointedness, control of the senses, and fitness for vision of the Self.

ii.42 **Saṃtoṣad anuttamaḥ sukha-labhaḥ.**

From contentment: attainment of unsurpassed happiness.

ii.43 **Kayendriya-siddhir aśuddhi-kṣayat tapasaḥ.**

From gradual destruction of impurity by austerities or purifications: extraordinary powers (*siddhis*) of the body and sense-faculties.

ii.44 **Svadhyayad iṣṭa-devata-samprayogaḥ.**

By self-education, e.g., study of scriptures, recitation of mantras: communion with the desired deity.

ii.45 **Samadhi-siddhir Iśvara-praṇidhanat.**

By resignation to Iśvara: perfection of *samadhi*.

3rd limb: Postures (asanas)

ii.46 **Sthira-sukham asanam.**

Posture should be steady and comfortable.

ii.47 **Prayatna-śaithilyananta-samapattibhyam.**

Posture is secured by relaxation of effort and meditation on the infinite (*ananta*).

ii.48 **Tato dvandvanabhighataḥ.**

Thence one is undisturbed by the pairs of opposites (*dvandvas*) [such as heat and cold].

4th limb: Control of vital energy through breath (*praṇayama*)

ii.49 **Tasmin sati śvasa-praśvasayor gati-vicchedaḥ praṇayamaḥ.**

With *asana* accomplished, *praṇayama* is cessation of the motion of inhalation and exhalation.

ii.50 **Bahyabhyantara-stambha-vṛttir deśakala-saṃkhyabhiḥ paridṛṣṭo dirghasukṣmaḥ.**

Praṇayama's modifications --external [cessation of breath prior to exhalation], internal [cessation of breath prior to inhalation], and restrained [restraint of both of these by a single effort]-- are regulated by place, time, and number, and become progressively prolonged and subtle.

ii.51 **Bahyabhyantara-viṣayakṣepi caturthaḥ.**

The fourth type of *praṇayama* goes beyond the domain of the internal and external.

ii.52 **Tataḥ kṣiyate prakaśavaraṇam.**

Thence is dissolved the covering of the inner light.

[The "covering" occludes discriminative knowledge. It is formed of *karma* and the *kleśas*.]

ii.53 **Dharaṇasu ca yogyata manasaḥ.**

And the mind's fitness for concentration (*dharaṇa*) is attained.

5th limb: Withdrawal of the senses (*pratyahara*)

ii.54 **Sva-viṣayasamprayoge citta-svarupanukara ivendriyaṇaṃ pratyaharaḥ.**

Withdrawal of the senses (*pratyahara*) is that in which the senses, by not contacting their objects, imitate, as it were, the nature of the mind.
[i.e., As the mind is restrained, so the senses are restrained.]

ii.55 **Tataḥ parama vaśyatendriyaṇam.**

Thence is gained ultimate mastery over the senses.

Section III
Vibhuti: Attainments

Yoga's three inner limbs (*samyama*)

iii.1 **Deśa-bandhaś cittasya dharaṇa.**

Concentration (*dharana*) is the confining of the mind to one place, [i.e., to an object of meditation].

iii.2 **Tatra pratyayaikatanata dhyanam.**

Contemplation (*dhyana*) is the unified flow of the mind in that place, [i.e., the "place" concentrated upon in *dharaṇa*].

iii.3 **Tad evarthamatra-nirbhasaṃ svarupa-śunyam iva samadhiḥ.**

Absorption (*samadhi*) is the same as contemplation (*dhyana*), except that the mind shines with the light of the object alone, and is devoid, as it were, of its own nature.

iii.4 **Trayam ekatra saṃyamaḥ.**

The three together (*dhyana*, *dharaṇa*, and *samadhi*) are *saṃyama*.

iii.5 **Taj-jayat prajñalokaḥ.**

From mastery of *saṃyama* comes the light of higher knowledge (*prajña*).

iii.6 **Tasya bhumiṣu viniyogaḥ.**

Saṃyama's application is made in stages.

iii.7 **Trayam antarangaṃ purvebhyaḥ.**

The three are internal limbs (*antaranga*) in relation to the preceding ones.

<u>The transition to seedless (*nirbīja*) samadhi</u>

iii.8 **Tad api bahir-aṅgaṃ nirbījasya.**

Yet even these [three] limbs are external to the seedless (*nirbīja*) *samadhi*.

iii.9 **Vyutthana-nirodha-saṃskarayor abhibhava-pradurbhavau nirodha-kṣaṇa-cittanvayo nirodha-pariṇamaḥ.**

Suppression-transformation (*nirodha pariṇama*) is the mind's pervasion by suppression (*nirodha*), in the moments between the arising and cessation of impressions (*saṃskaras*).

iii.10 **Tasya praśanta-vahita saṃskarat.**

The flow of suppression-transformation becomes tranquil with the prevailing of *saṃskaras* of suppression.

iii.11 **Sarvarthataikagratayoḥ kṣayodayau cittasya samadhi-pariṇmaḥ.**

Samadhi transformation (*samadhi parinama*) is the destruction of many-pointedness, and arising of one-pointedness (*ekagrata*).

iii.12 **Tataḥ punaḥ śantoditau tulya-pratyayau cittasyaikagrata-pariṇamaḥ.**

Then, again, the transformation of one-pointedness (*ekagrata parinama*) is that transformation of mind wherein the cognitions that arise and subside are the same.

iii.13 **Etena bhutendriyeṣu dharma-lakṣaṇa-vastha-pariṇama vyakhyataḥ.**

By this explanation of the three-fold transformation of mind, also explained are the transformations of essential properties (*dharmas*), characteristics (*lakṣanas*), and conditions (*avastha*) in the elements and sense-faculties.

iii.14 **Śantoditavyapadeśya-dharmanupati dharmī.**

Dharmī [the substratum which bears properties] is the common ground of latent, active, and unmanifest properties.

iii.15 **Kramanyatvaṃ pariṇamanyatve hetuḥ.**

The difference in the order of succession is the reason for the difference in transformations.

Extraordinary powers (*vibhuti*) attainable by *samyama*

iii.16 **Pariṇama-traya-saṃyamad atītanagata-jñanam.**

By *saṃyama* on the three transformations [*nirodhaḥ*-, *samadhi*-, and *ekagrata-parinama*] knowledge of the past and future is attained.

iii.17 **Śabdartha-pratyayanam itaretaradhyasat saṃkaras tat-pravibhaga-saṃyamat sarva-bhuta-ruta-jñanam.**

A word's sound, meaning, and the idea conveyed by it appear as one, due to their mutual superimposition. By *saṃyama* on the distinctions between them: comprehension of sounds uttered by all beings.

iii.18 **Saṃskara-sakṣatkaraṇat.**

By direct perception of the impressions (*saṃskaras)*: knowledge of former lives.

iii.19 **Pratyayasya para-citta-jñanam.**

By *saṃyama* on the contents of the mind (*pratyayas*): knowledge of others' minds.

iii.20 **Na ca tat salambanaṃ tasyaviṣayī-bhutatvat.**

But knowledge of another's mind does not include knowledge of the objects supporting the other's mental contents, for the objects themselves are beyond the reach of *saṃyama*.

iii.21 **Kaya-rupa-saṃyamat tad-grahya-śakti-stambhe cakṣuḥ-prakaśasaṃprayoge 'ntardhanam.**

By *saṃyama* on the form of the body, its capacity to be apprehended is suspended; without contact between the light reflected from the body and the observer's eyes, the body is invisible.

iii.22 **Etena śabdady antardhanam uktam.**

From the above, the disappearance of sound and other factors is explained.

iii.23 **Sopakramam nirupakramam ca karma tat-samyamad apapanta-jñanam ariṣṭebhyo va.**

By *samyama* on *karma*, whether fast-in-fruition or slow, or on the portents of death: knowledge of the time of death.

iii.24 **Maitry-adiṣu balani.**

By *samyama* on friendliness, etc.: strength of such qualities.

iii.25 **Baleṣu hasti-baladīni.**

By *samyama* on the strengths of animals: strength of an elephant, etc.

iii.26 **Pravṛtty-aloka-nyasat sukṣma vyavahita-viprakṛṣṭa-jñanam.**

By directing towards them the light of super-physical sense-faculties: knowledge of the subtle or minute, the hidden, and the distant.

iii.27 **Bhuvana-jñanam surye samyamat.**

By *samyama* on the sun: knowledge of various world-regions.

iii.28 **Candre tara-vyuha-jñanam.**

By *samyama* on the moon: knowledge of the arrangement of the stars.

iii.29 **Dhruve tad-gati-jñanam.**

By *samyama* on the pole-star: knowledge of the stars' movements.

iii.30 **Nabhi-cakre kaya-vyuha-jñanam.**

By *samyama* on the navel-center (*cakra*): knowledge of the systems of the body.

iii.31 **Kaṇṭha-kupe kṣut-pipasa-nivṛttiḥ.**

By *saṃyama* on the pit of the throat: cessation of hunger and thirst.

iii.32 **Kurma-naḍyaṃ sthairyam.**

By *saṃyama* on the *kurma-naḍī* ("tortoise-channel") [a tortoise-shaped nerve-channel below the pit of the throat]: steadiness [like that of a reptile's power of hibernation].

iii.33 **Murdha-jyotiṣi siddha-darśanam.**

By *saṃyama* on the light in the crown of the head· vision of the *Siddhas* (adepts with supra-normal powers).

iii.34 **Pratibhad va sarvam.**

Or by intuitive knowledge (*pratibha*), [knowledge immediately preceding the dawn of discriminative knowledge]: knowledge of all these indicated above.

iii.35 **Hṛdaye citta-saṃvit.**

By *saṃyama* on the heart: knowledge of the mind.

iii.36 **Sattva-puruṣayor atyantasaṃkīrṇayoḥ pratyayaviśeṣo bhogaḥ pararthat svarthasaṃyamat puruṣa-jñanam.**

Experience consists in not distinguishing *sattva* [*buddhi*: the faculty of knowing] from *puruṣa*, though they are entirely distinct. *Saṃyama* on what is in *puruṣa's* own interest, as distinct from what is in the interest of another (of *prakṛti*), results in knowledge of *puruṣa*.

iii.37 **Tataḥ pratibha-śravaṇa-vedanadarśasvada-varta jayante.**

From that is produced prescience and intuitional [non-empirical and supra-physical] hearing, touch, vision, taste, and smell.

iii.38 **Te samadhav upasarga vyutthane siddhayaḥ.**

They are obstacles to *samadhi*, but attainments to the out-turned mind.

iii.39 **Bandha-karaṇa-śaithilyat pracara-saṃvedanac ca cittasya para-śarīraveśaḥ.**

Upon loosening the cause of bondage, and from knowledge of the passages of the mind, the mind can enter another's body.

iii.40 **Udana-jayaj jala-paṅka-kaṇṭakadiṣv asaṅga utkrantiś ca.**

By mastery of *udana* [the *praṇa* or vital air operating from the throat up to the top of the head]: levitation and non-contact with water, mire, thorns, etc.

iii.41 **Samana-jayaj jvalanam.**

By mastery of *samana* [the vital air operating between the navel and the heart]: effulgence of the body (or, blazing of the gastric fire).

iii.42 **Śrotrakaśayoḥ saṃbandha-saṃyamad divyaṃ śrotram.**

By *saṃyama* on the relation of space (*akaśa*) and the power of hearing: divine [supraphysical] hearing.

iii.43 **Kayakaśayoḥ saṃbandha-saṃyamat laghu-tula-samapatteś cakaśa-gamanam.**

By *saṃyama* on the relation of the body and space, or by samapatti (coalescence of the mind) with lightness, such as that of cotton: travel through space.

iii.44 **Bahir akalpita vṛttir maha-videha tataḥ prakaśavaraṇa kṣayaḥ.**

Maha-videha (the Great non-Embodiment) consists in the mental activity actually outside of the body. From this is destroyed the veil of light [i.e., the luminous essence of the *sattva* intellect, or *buddhi*].

iii.45 **Sthula-svarupa-sukṣmanvayarthavattva-saṃyamyamad bhuta-jayaḥ.**

Mastery over the elements (*bhutas*) is attained by *saṃyama* on their gross state, their self-nature, their subtle state, their association with one another, and their purposiveness.

iii.46 **Tato'ṇimadi-pradurbhavaḥ kaya-sampat taddharmanabhighataś ca.**

Thence, the manifestation of *aṇiman* etc. [the power of becoming small as an atom, and the other seven extraordinary powers or *siddhis*], and perfection of the body and non-obstruction of its functions by them [i.e., by the properties of the elements].

iii.47 **Rupa-lavaṇya-bala-vajra-saṃhananatvani kaya-sampat.**

The perfection of the body consists in beauty, grace, strength, and adamantine hardness.

iii.48 **Grahaṇa-svarupasmitanvayarthavattva-saṃyamad indriya-jayaḥ.**

Mastery of the sense-organs is attained by *saṃyama* on their process of sensing, real nature, egoism, association with one another, and their function.

iii.49 **Tato manojavitvaṃ vikaraṇa-bhavaḥ pradhana-jayaś ca.**

Thence, quickness of the body like that of the mind, perception independent of bodily instruments, and mastery over primal matter (*pradhana*), [i.e., mastery of the modifications of *prakṛti*].

iii.50 **Sattva-puruṣanyata-khyati-matrasya sarva-bhavadhiṣṭhatṛtvam sarvajñatṛtvaṃ ca.**

Omniscience and supremacy over all states arises only for one who attains the knowledge to discriminate between *sattva* and *puruṣa*.

iii.51 **Tad-vairagyaad api doṣa bīja-kṣaye kaivalyam.**

Independence (*kaivalya*, or liberation) is attained by detachment even from discriminative knowledge, and upon the destruction of the seed of bondage.

iii.52 **Sthany-upanimantraṇe saṅga-smayakaraṇaṃ punar aniṣṭa-prasaṅgat.**

On the invitation of the presiding deities there should be avoidance of attachment or pride, because contact with the undesirable may recur.

Wisdom born of discriminative knowledge: (*vivekajam jñanam*)

iii.53 **Kṣaṇa-tat-kramayoḥ saṃyamad vivekajaṃ jñanam.**

By *saṃyama* on the moment and the process of its succession: wisdom-born-of-discriminative knowledge (*vivekajaṃ jñanam*).

iii.54 **Jati-lakṣaṇa-deśair anyatanavacchedat tulyayos tataḥ pratipattiḥ.**

From wisdom born of discriminative knowledge (*vivekajaṃ jñanam)*: knowledge of distinctions between two similar things indistinguishable by genus, characteristic, or position.

iii.55 **Tarakaṃ sarva-viśayaṃ sarvatha-viśayam akramaṃ ceti vivekajaṃ-jñanam.**

Wisdom born of discriminative knowledge (*vivekajaṁ jñanam*) is intuitional, [i.e., from one's own prescience, not from outside oneself]. It has all objects in its sphere, pertains to objects in all conditions [in past, present and future states], and is without succession [known simultaneously as a whole, rather than in sequence].

Independence or liberation (*kaivalya*)

iii.56 **Sattva-puruṣayoḥ śuddhi-samye kaivalyam.**

Kaivalya is attained in gaining equal purity of the *sattva* (mind) and the *puruṣa* [the consciousness which is the Self].

[*Yoga-bhaṣya* iii.56:
When the essence of the intelligence (*buddhi*) with the dirt of *rajas* and *tamas* removed, has the notion of the distinctness of the *puruṣa* as its sole remaining object, and all the seeds of affliction have been burnt up, then does it, as it were, assume a state of purity similar to that of the *puruṣa*.]

Section IV
Kaivalya: Liberation

Means of attaining extraordinary powers

iv.1 **Janmauṣadhi-mantra-tapaḥ-samadhi-jaḥ siddhayaḥ.**

The extraordinary powers (*siddhis*) result from birth, medicinal plants (*oṣadhi*), sacred utterances (*mantras*), purificatory austerities (*tapas*), and *samadhi*.

Metaphysics: arguments against idealism

iv.2 **Jaty-antara-pariṇamaḥ prakṛty-apurat.**

Transformation into other life-forms or classes occurs by the abundant flow of *prakṛti* [containing all the potentialities of nature].

iv.3 **Nimittam aprayojakam prakṛtīnaṃ varaṇa-bhedas tu tataḥ kṣetrikavat.**

The incidental cause [the cause that seems to bring about change] does not impel the evolving potentialities; it only removes the obstacles to virtue, as a farmer regulates water in a field.

iv.4 **Nirmaṇa-cittany asmita-matrat.**

Constructed minds [centers of consciousness artificially projected by yogic consciousness] proceed from egoism (*asmita*) alone.

iv.5 **Pravṛtti-bhede prayojakaṃ cittam ekam anekeṣam.**

The one [natural] mind impels the activity of the many constructed minds.

iv.6 **Tatra dhyanajam anaśayam.**

Of these constructed activities of mind, only those born of meditation are free from karmic impressions (*anaśayam*).

iv.7 **Karmaśuklakṛṣṇaṃ yoginas tri-vidham itareṣam.**

A yogin's *karma* is neither white nor black [good nor evil].
The *karma* of others is three-fold.

iv.8 **Tatas tad-vipakanuguṇanam evabhivyaktir vasananam.**

Thence, from the three types of actions, are manifest only those tendencies for which conditions are favorable.

iv.9 **Jati-deśa-kala-vyavahitanam apy anantaryaṃ smṛti-saṃskarayor ekarupatvat.**

Because memory and subliminal impressions have the same form, there is an uninterrupted relationship of cause and effect, even across birth-states, place, and time.

iv.10 **Tasam anaditvaṃ caśiṣo nityatvat.**

And these subliminal impressions have no beginning in time, because the desire to live is eternal.

iv.11 **Hetu-phalāśrayalambanaiḥ saṃgṛhitatvad eṣam abhave tad-abhavaḥ.**

Subliminal impressions are held together by cause [ignorance] and effect [suffering], and by substratum-object [the mind and the stimulus). Hence, on cessation of these, the subliminal impressions cease.

iv.12 **Atītanagataṃ svarupato'sty adhva-bhedad dharmaṇam.**

The past and the future exist in their own nature [the past exists in present experience of past events, the future exists as the manifest-to-be]. From the different paths that are possible, events have different combinations of properties.

iv.13 **Te vyakta-sukṣmaḥ guṇatmanaḥ.**

These properties, whether manifest [in the present] or subtle [in the past or future], are of the nature of different arrangements of the *guṇas* [fundamental constituents of materiality].

iv.14 **Pariṇamaikatvad vastu-tattvam.**

The essence of something is due to the uniqueness of the *guṇas'* various transformations.

iv.15 **Vastu-samye citta-bhedat tayor vibhaktaḥ panthaḥ.**

While a thing remains the same, cognitions of it differ, owing to differences in the mentalities of various cognizers.

iv.16 **Na caika-citta-tantram vastu tad-apramaṇakaṃ tada kiṃ syat.**

Nor is a thing dependent on a single mind, for if uncognized by that mind, what would become of it?

iv.17 **Tad-uparagapekṣitvac cittasya vastu jñatajñatam.**

A thing is known or unknown according to the mind's capacity to be colored by it.

iv.18 **Sada jñataś citta-vṛttayas tat-prabhoḥ puruṣasyapariṇamitvat.**

The modifications of the mind are always known to its lord (*puruṣa*), because of *puruṣa's* changelessness.

iv.19 **Na tat svabhasaṃ dṛśyatvat.**

The mind is not self-illuminating, because it is perceptible.

iv.20 **Eka-samaye cobhayanavadharaṇam.**

Nor can the mind comprehend both itself and its object simultaneously [whereas the Seer (*puruṣa*) can].

iv.21 **Cittantara-dṛśye buddhi-buddher ati-prasaṅgaḥ smṛti-saṃkaraś ca.**

If one mind were to be cognized by another, it would lead to an infinite regress pertaining to cognition of cognitions, and to confusion of memories.

iv.22 **Citer apratisaṃkramayas tad-akarapattau sva-buddhi-saṃvedanaṃ.**

Consciousness (*puruṣa*) is non-moving, but knows itself by reflecting or assuming the form of the intelligence (*buddhi*), and thus becomes self-reflective.

iv.23 **Draṣṭṛ-dṛśyoparaktaṃ cittaṃ sarvartham.**

The mind is all-comprehending when colored by both the Seer [*puruṣa's* power of consciousness], and by the Seen [objects of knowledge].

Self-realization

iv.24 **Tad asaṃkhyeya-vasanabhiś citram api pararthaṃ saṃhatya-karitvat.**

Although the mind is variegated by innumerable sub-conscious residua (*vasanas*), it exists for the sake of another [*puruṣa*], because it acts in collocation.

iv.25 **Viśeṣa-darśina atma-bhava-bhavana-vinivṛttiḥ.**

For one who has seen the distinction between Self and other, [i.e., the distinction between the *puruṣa* and the mind], there is cessation of dwelling on oneself.

iv.26 **Tada hi viveka-nimnaṃ kaivalya-pragbharam cittam.**

Then the mind inclines toward discriminative knowledge, and gravitates toward independence (*kaivalya*).

iv.27 **Tac-chidreṣu pratyayantarаṇi saṃskarebhyaḥ.**

In the breaks in discriminative knowledge, other thoughts arise from subliminal impressions (*saṃskaras*).

iv.28 **Hanam eṣaṃ kleśavad uktam.**

The removal of these *saṃskaras* is like the removal of the afflictions (*kleśas*), as has been described.

iv.29 **Prasaṃkhyane'py akusīdasya sarvatha viveka-khyater dharma-meghaḥ samadhiḥ.**

For one who no longer has interest even in knowledge available in the highest meditation (*prasaṃkhya*), and who in every way maintains discriminative knowledge, there arises dharma-cloud-samadhi (*dharma-mega-samadhi*).

iv.30 **Tataḥ kleśa-karma-nivṛttiḥ.**

Thence follows cessation of afflictions (*kleśas*) and actions (*karmas*).

iv.31 **Tada sarvavaraṇa-malapetasya jñanasyanantyaj jñeyam alpam.**

Then, due to the infinity of knowledge from which the veils of impurity are removed, that which is knowable by the ordinary mind is recognized as trivial.

iv.32 **Tataḥ kṛtarthanaṃ pariṇama-krama-samaptir guṇanam.**

Thence, with the constituents of materiality (*guṇas*) having fulfilled their purpose, the process of their transformation is ended.

iv.33 **Kṣaṇa-pratiyogī pariṇamaparanta-nirgrahyaḥ kramaḥ.**

Succession (*kramaḥ*) is the uninterrupted sequence of moments, comprehended at the end of transformation [of the *guṇas*].

[The appearance of time as successive arises in experiencing one's changing mental states, which in turn arise from the transformation of the *guṇas*].

iv.34 **Puruṣartha-śunyanaṃ guṇanaṃ pratiprasavaḥ kaivalyaṃ svarupa-pratiṣṭha va citi-śakter iti.**

Independence (*kaivalya*) is the re-mergence of the *guṇas* [constituents of materiality] back into their latent state [as undifferentiated *prakṛti* or materiality], because of their becoming devoid of the capacity to serve *puruṣa's* purpose. Then *puruṣa* is established in its own true nature, in other words, as pure consciousness.

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